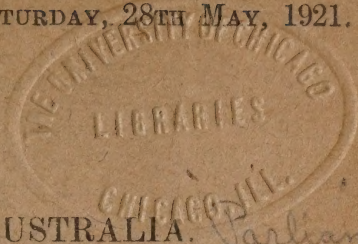


No. 71.

[ISSUED SATURDAY, 28TH MAY, 1921.

828.94

AU71a1



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA. *Parliament*

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

FIRST SESSION, 1920-21.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 20 MAY.		HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 26 MAY.	
Preference to Soldiers: Bureau of Science and Industry	8577	Wool Export and Local Sales	8608
New Guinea Expedition	8577	Federal Capital Board	8609
War Service Homes Commission: Purchase of Saw Mills and Timber Areas	8578	Ex-warrant Officer Little	8609
Old-age Pensions	8578	Mont Park Hospital: Employment of Returned Soldiers	8610
Basic Wage: Mr. Knibbs' Report	8578	Federal Capital Design	8610
Art Union and Lottery Correspondence	8578	Repatriation.—Living Allowances: Settlement of Soldiers: Scales of Pensions	8610
Exportation of Wheat and Flour to South Africa	8578	Wheat and Flour: Sales to South Africa	8611
War Service Homes Operations	8578	Break of Railway Gauges	8611
Wheat Pool Inquiry	8579	Cotton Seed and Raw Cotton	8611
Australian Imperial Force: Mentally Afflicted Soldiers	8579	Papers	8611
Property of German Nationals	8579	Tariff	8612
The Census	8580	Adjournment.—Delayed Delivery of Telegram	8654
Tariff	8580		
Adjournment.—Lieut. Colonel Walker's Sworn Statement	8608		
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 25 MAY.			
Appointment of Acting Speaker	8605	Duty on Prunes	8654
Buildings at Canberra	8605	Iron and Steel Duties: Comparison with American and French Tariffs	8655
New Guinea Commission	8605	Soldier Settlement	8655
Loan to Queensland.—Relief of Unemployment: Development of Burnett Lands	8605	Bureau of Science and Industry: New Appointments	8655
Fellmongering Industry	8606	American Shareholders	8655
Price of Butter	8606	War Gratuities	8655
Speech by Prime Minister	8607	Adjournment (Formal).—War Pensions	8658
Prime Minister: Expenses in London	8607	Customs Department: Appointment of Comptroller-General and Collectors	8679
Riot in Sydney Domain	8607	Public Service Superannuation Bill	8679
Upper Burnett, Callide Valley, and Prairie Lands: Railway Construction	8607	Federal Capital.—Road and Street Construction—Plans of Hostel and Halls	8679
Federal Capital: Erection of Buildings	8608	Case of Mrs. Farr	8680
War Gratuities	8608	Postal Department: Clerical Division	8680
Basic Wage and Child Allowance	8608	Koorman Tomyaiff	8680
		Child Endowment	8681
		War Pensions	8681
		Tariff	8682

Exchange Duplicate, L. C.

Dup.
U. of C.
Oh.

EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.

FIRST SESSION.

Governor-General.*

His Excellency the Right Honorable HENRY WILLIAM, BARON FORSTER, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia,

* From 6th October, 1920.

Australian National Government.

(From 10th January, 1918.)

Prime Minister and Attorney-General	..	..	The Right Honorable William Morris Hughes, P.C., K.C.
Minister for the Navy	..	..	The Right Honorable Sir Joseph Cook, P.C., G.C.M.G.
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable W. H. Land Smith (28th July 1920).
Treasurer	..	..	The Right Honorable Lord Forrest, P.C., G.C.M.G.
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. (27th March, 1918).†††
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Right Honorable Sir Joseph Cook, P.C., G.C.M.G. (28th July, 1920).
Minister for Defence	..	..	The Honorable George Foster Pearce.
Minister for Repatriation	..	..	The Honorable Edward Davis Milten.
Minister for Works and Railways	..	..	The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C.
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom (27th March, 1918).
Minister for Home and Territories	..	..	The Honorable Patrick McMahon Glynn, K.C.†††
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable Alexander Poynton (4th February, 1920)
Minister for Trade and Customs	..	..	The Honorable Jens August Jensen.†
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. (18th December, 1918).
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable Walter Massy Greene (17th January, 1919).
Postmaster-General	..	..	The Honorable William Webster †††
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable George Henry Wise (4th February, 1920).
Minister for Health	..	..	The Honorable Walter Massy Greene (10th March, 1921).
Vice-President of the Executive Council	..	..	The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom.
			<i>Succeeded by</i>
			The Honorable Edward John Russell (27th March, 1918).
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Edward John Russell.
			Appointed Vice-President of the Executive Council, 27th March, 1918.
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Alexander Poynton.
			Appointed Minister for Home and Territories, 4th February, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable George Henry Wise.
			Appointed Postmaster-General, 4th February, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Walter Massy Greene.*
			Appointed Minister for Trade and Customs, 17th January, 1919.
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Richard Beaumont Orchard.**
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Sir Granville de Laune Ryrie, K.C.M.G., C.B., V.D.††
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable William Henry Laird Smith.††
			Appointed Minister for the Navy, 28th July, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	..	The Honorable Arthur Stanislaus Rodgers.***

* Appointed 26th March, 1918.—† Removed from office, 18th December, 1918.—** Resigned office, 31st January, 1919.—†† Appointed 4th February, 1920.—††† Resigned 3rd February, 1920.—†††† Resignation from office gazetted, 15th June, 1920.—*** Appointed 28th July, 1920.

Senators.

(From 1st July, 1920.)

President—Senator the Honorable Thomas Givens.

Chairman of Committees—Senator Thomas Jerome Kingston Bakhap.

*Adamson, John, C.B.E. (Q.)	*Glasgow, Sir Thomas William, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. (Q.)
Bakhap, Thomas Jerome Kingston (T.)	*Guthrie, James Francis (V.)
*Benny, Benjamin (S.A.)	*Guthrie, Robert Storr (S.A.)
Bolton, William Kinsey, C.B.E., V.D. (V.)	Henderson, George (W.A.)
³ Buzacott, Richard (W.A.)	Keating, Hon. John Henry (T.)
*Cox, Charles Frederick, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. (N.S.W.)	*Lynch, Patrick Joseph (W.A.)
Crawford, Thomas William (Q.)	Millen, Hon. Edward Davis (N.S.W.)
De Largie, Hon. Hugh (W.A.)	*Millen, John Dunlop (T.)
*Drake-Brockman, Edmund Alfred, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. (W.A.)	¹ *Newland, John, C.B.E. (S.A.)
*Duncan, Walter Leslie (N.S.W.)	*Payne, Hon. Herbert James Mockford (T.)
Earle, Hon. John (T.)	² Pearce, Hon. George Foster (W.A.)
*Elliott, Harold Edward, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., D.C.M. (V.)	¹ Plain, William (V.)
Fairbairn, George (V.)	Pratten, Herbert Edward (N.S.W.)
Foll, Hattil Spencer (Q.)	Reid, Matthew (Q.)
² Foster, George Matthew (T.)	¹ Rowell, James, C.B., V.D. (S.A.)
*Gardiner, Albert (N.S.W.)	*Russell, Hon. Edward John (V.)
*Givens, Hon. Thomas (Q.)	Senior, William (S.A.)
	Thomas, Hon. Josiah (N.S.W.)
	⁵ Vardon, Edward Charles (S.A.)
	*Wilson, Reginald Victor (S.A.)

1. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 21st July, 1920. 2. Elected 18th December, 1919. Sworn 21st July, 1920. 3. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 26th February, 1920. 4. Deceased reported, 6th April, 1921. 5. Appointed by State Governor in Council, 18th February, 1921. Sworn 6th April, 1921.
* Elected 18th December, 1919. Sworn 1st July, 1920.

fallen considerably during recent months. As a matter of fact, the price of almost every commodity that we have been discussing has materially declined during the same period.

Mr. HILL.—But not in the same ratio.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Compare the price of hides with the prices which are being charged for boots. I could cite dozens of instances of a similar character. This is a question which will have to be faced in the near future. We must take the necessary action to prevent our manufacturers exploiting the people of this country. So far as soap is concerned, it is in a similar position to that occupied by tallow. The great body of men who use tallow in mining enterprises have been compelled to pay three times its pre-war price for it. The same remark is applicable to soap.

Mr. JOWETT.—The price of tallow has fallen considerably.

Mr. CHARLTON.—But it has not fallen to the extent that it should. Some time must elapse before articles of this character decline to reasonable prices. But that is no reason why we should not attempt to buttress our own industries. Soap making is not confined to a couple of companies in the Commonwealth.

Mr. GREENE.—There are about sixty or seventy firms engaged in it.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Many of those firms conduct operations only in a small way, and some of them are located in country towns. Consequently they must be protected, and as we are about to impose an additional duty upon ordinary soap, I see no objection to the duty which it is proposed to levy upon fancy soaps. We shall have to do something in the near future to insure profitable employment to our own people, because nobody knows what the next two or three years will bring forth. It is possible that we shall experience a very trying time. Fancy soaps are luxuries, and if people want them they should be compelled to pay for them.

Mr. JOWETT (Grampians) [10.6].—I hope that the Committee will support the proposal of the Minister (Mr. Greene). As has been pointed out by the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton), it is not proposed to increase the duty upon household soaps

from the United Kingdom. These are the soaps which are used by the multitude of the people in Australia. There is, however, a proposal to increase the duty which is at present levied upon fancy soaps. That increase, in the case of toilet, fancy, or medicated soaps from the United Kingdom, amounts to only 5 per cent. It is a very small increase, and I shall support it upon the ground that these soaps are generally absolute luxuries. They are mainly used by the rich, and if the ordinary household soaps are not good enough for them, they should be obliged to pay a little more for their luxuries. It is in the highest degree desirable that articles of luxury should pay duty upon a considerably higher scale than should articles of necessity. This is a clear case of granting protection to an industry without doing harm to any considerable body of persons.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [10.9].—In regard to household soap, I imagine that we could almost dispense with any duty whatever. The industry has been established so long, and the raw product is sold at such a cheap rate, that we ought to be able not only to supply the requirements of our own people in the matter of ordinary soaps, but to become large exporters of them.

Mr. GREENE.—I hope that we shall be, before long.

Mr. GREGORY.—So far as toilet soaps are concerned, I have here statistics relating to the operations of the huge English Combine which has been created.—a Combine which has its tentacles here in Australia. There are certain local firms which are part of that huge combination, and we ought not to give our support to such a monopoly. I desire to help forward trade with the Empire, and particularly with Great Britain.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—To which soap monopoly does the honorable member refer?

Mr. GREGORY.—To Lever Brothers. The Minister (Mr. Greene) has already pointed out that a large quantity of these soaps come from Germany and Italy. I am not prepared to grant any concession to these countries. But I think that we ought to endeavour to build up trade with the United Kingdom. I cannot follow the arguments of the honorable member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews), because

it has not been shown that in these industries any great care has been taken of the workers. Complaints have been made of the high cost of living, and in almost every country of the world the wages paid have been better than those paid in Australia. The people who have been making fortunes here have not been too careful of the interests of the workers.

Mr. MAKIN.—But prices are based upon the capacity of the people to pay.

Mr. GREGORY.—We have been going absolutely mad in this Chamber during the past few days. I am satisfied that a day of reckoning will come. I move—

That sub-item A be amended by adding after the words "35 per cent." the words "And on and after 20th May, 1921, per lb., 5d., or ad val., 30 per cent. (British)."

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [10.14].—One must admire the pertinacity of a good Free Trader like the honorable member for Dampier, who, nevertheless, is not a Free Trader in the scientific sense of the word. He has advanced the same old argument about the existence of a Combine. But if this Parliament chooses to do so, it can legislate to control that Combine. The Soap Combine in England is one of the greatest in the world. But surely the honorable member will agree that no more important pronouncement has been made by a manufacturer than that which was recently made by Lord Leverhulme, who is the head of Lever Brothers. He has gone so far as to advocate a six-hour day, and for that I thank him. He was one of the first men in England to reduce the working day to eight hours.

Mr. HILL.—And well he might.

Dr. MALONEY.—I quite agree; but when one is not expecting it from such a source, there is all the more credit in that it should have emanated therefrom. He also reduced women's working hours to seven per day. He built healthy cottages at Port Sunlight, where the death-rate was not one-half what it was, only 2 miles distant, in one of the suburbs of Liverpool.

Mr. HILL.—And the poor people all over the United Kingdom paid for it.

Dr. MALONEY.—Possibly. Nevertheless, his was a splendid example, which was not followed all over Britain—because the House of Commons did not do its duty, just as this House does not do its duty. If Lord Leverhulme were

to introduce a six-hour day in Australia, his example would be followed much more widely and swiftly by Australian manufacturers than by those in the United Kingdom. I would prefer not to see 1 lb. of soap come into Australia. Are we not capable of making all our own requirements? If there should be a combine charging unjustly, there is a limitation of prices upon which this House can insist. I hope the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) will not continue to advance the old argument, "It will build up a big combine here." I agree with the sentiments expressed by the honorable member for Port Melbourne (Mr. Mathews). I, too, if it were possible, would prevent anything coming into Australia that can be manufactured here—making this reservation only: that Parliament should control and insist upon the observance of fixed prices. And, further, when the law is broken in that respect, the punishment should be gaol. Fines are no good in the cases of rich combines.

Mr. LAZZARINI (Werriwa) [10.20].—I am in sympathy with the desire to impose high duties in respect of all goods which are imported, but which could be adequately manufactured in Australia. My one objection to the imposition of duties is where they apply to articles which are not made locally in sufficient quantity to fulfil our requirements. This reservation cannot apply, however, to the manufacture of soap. It is fallacious to say that the imposition of high duties is bound to build up monopolies; but even if that were the outcome, they would be monopolies which we could deal with. Does the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) think there is not a monopoly among the importing agencies? They are the most easily constituted, the most dangerous, and the greediest of all monopolies. I have been pleased to listen to the arguments advanced to-night from the corner in denunciation of monopolists. I look for the support of honorable members of the Country party whenever motions may be launched from this side to deal with monopolies and profiteers. I trust the proposed imposts will stand. I would support an even higher duty on soap.

Mr. JACKSON (Bass) [10.23].—I desire, very briefly, to call attention to one interesting phase of the soap-manufacturing industry in Australia. It is now beginning to build up an export trade. Over-sea markets are being secured. Last year we exported, in fancy soaps, 500,225 lbs., of a value of £47,206; and in household soaps, 8,007,356 lbs., valued at £174,724.

Mr. RILEY (South Sydney) [10.24].—Some honorable members think that, so long as there can be provided common soap for the common people, there is no need to worry about anything, or any one, else. But there are such things as fine toilet soaps. Why should not the common people, who are the backbone of this country, use good soap? Honorable members now want to put up the price of fancy toilet soaps in order to keep the common people from using them. I will not oppose the proposed duty, but I warn honorable members that the result will be that Lever Bros., and one or two other firms which control the industry in the Commonwealth, will merely employ the opportunity to still further increase the price of toilet soaps. The English firm is making toilet soaps in Australia today, and the imposition of this duty will not cause it to make any more here than at present. When we import toilet soaps from England we get them from a branch of Lever Bros. If we impose a high duty, that firm will import just a little of its English manufacture, and will then supply the local market with its locally-made article, upon which the price will have been put up. The poor people will suffer a little more, and the wealthy manufacturers will make a little more.

Amendment negatived.

Item agreed to.

Item 95 (Sparklets), item 96 (Spices), item 97 (Starch), item 98 (Starch flours, including custard powders), and item 99 (Straw) agreed to.

Item 100 (Tea).

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [10.28].—I do not propose now to enter into serious discussion of this item further than to suggest that the Committee might agree to allow tea from within the Empire to come in free, and to impose a duty upon tea produced in foreign countries.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.30 p.m.

House of Representatives.

Friday, 20 May, 1921.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. J. M. Chanter) took the chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

PREFERENCE TO SOLDIERS.

BUREAU OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

Mr. ATKINSON.—I ask the Minister for Trade and Customs whether it has been decided to give preference to returned soldiers in making appointments for the establishment of the Bureau of Science and Industry, and if not, whether he will give us the assurance that preference will be shown to returned soldiers?

Mr. GREENE.—So far as I know, applications for positions in the Bureau have not yet come before me, but when they do the claims of returned soldiers will receive due consideration. The work to be done is highly technical, and in the final selection the first consideration must be the fitness of the applicant to perform it. Subject to fitness, of course, preference will be given to returned soldiers.

NEW GUINEA EXPEDITION.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I understand that Dr. Campbell Brown and about twelve others left in October last for New Guinea and the adjacent islands as a Commission. Will the Acting Prime Minister say what has become of them; whether they are still in the Territory, or are lost; and if they have furnished any report to the Government on the work that has been done?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—At the moment I cannot say whether they are lost, stolen or strayed. The number of those who went away is not so large as the honorable member thinks; less than half-a-dozen went.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Several have drifted back on their own.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I know nothing of that; but have sent a communication by radio inquiring where the Commission is, and what it is doing.

WAR SERVICE HOMES COMMISSION.

PURCHASE OF SAW MILLS AND TIMBER AREAS.

Mr. FOWLER presented the report of the Joint Committee on Public Accounts upon the purchase of saw mills and timber areas by the War Service Homes Commission.

Ordered to be printed.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

Mr. BOWDEN.—In view of the statement made recently by the Treasurer that it is impossible at the present time to increase the old-age pensions, I ask the right honorable gentleman if an arrangement could not be made which would permit pensioners to earn a little more money on their own account, without suffering a reduction of pension?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Even that would involve a big outlay by the Commonwealth, because it would increase the number of persons eligible for pensions. If you allowed pensioners to earn another £1 per week, you would increase the cost of the pensions to the Commonwealth by about £750,000 a year.

BASIC WAGE.

Mr. KNIBBS' REPORT.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I ask the Acting Prime Minister to make available the report of Mr. Knibbs to the Prime Minister on the operation of the basic wage?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—When the honorable member mentioned the matter before, I referred the question to Mr. Knibbs, who was then on the point of starting for Queensland, and he did not see his way to give his consent to the publication of the report, which is in its nature confidential. When he returns, I shall consult him about it again.

ART UNION AND LOTTERY CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. BAMFORD.—As the Postmaster-General's Department will not deliver correspondence addressed to Tattersall's or to the agents of the firm in Tasmania or elsewhere, I ask whether there is the same embargo on letters addressed to the directors of the Golden Casket lottery, and whether it is intended to treat in the same way letters sent in connexion with the

lottery which is contemplated by the New South Wales Government.

Mr. WISE.—Our action in regard to the New South Wales lottery will be determined when the occasion arises. As for the first part of the question, I replied some time ago that we do not prohibit correspondence addressed to the agents for art unions.

EXPORTATION OF WHEAT AND FLOUR TO SOUTH AFRICA.

Mr. RILEY.—On the day that the Prime Minister left for England, he promised to refer to the Acting Prime Minister my request that the names of the persons responsible for the exportation of bad wheat to South Africa should be made known. He said that the Acting Prime Minister, no doubt, would give the information. Is the right honorable gentleman in a position to do so?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—If the honorable member will place his question on the notice-paper, I shall see if I can get him an answer; but the subject is full of difficulties, and I think that the less said about it until these have been cleared up the better.

Mr. RILEY.—Will you make a statement about it?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I cannot do that yet, because we are in communication with the South African Government regarding it.

WAR SERVICE HOMES OPERATIONS.

Mr. CAMERON.—When may we expect the promised statement about the operations and future programme of the War Service Homes Commission?

Mr. RODGERS.—I hope to make a full statement before the end of the present financial year. The Public Accounts Committee has been inquiring into the operations of the War Service Homes Commission, and has just presented a report, and an advisory and consultative Board, with which I am in constant consultation, sits daily. My colleague, Senator Millen, and I have discussed many of their recommendations, and so has the Cabinet. I assure the honorable member that no half measures will be taken to put the operations of the Commission on a sound business footing.

Mr. GREGORY (for Dr. EARLE PAGE) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation, *upon notice*—

1. What is the total area of land purchased by the War Service Homes Commission for building purposes, and the total purchase money paid, or contracted to be paid, for same?

2. What proportion of the said land has been built upon, and when is it anticipated the balance will be utilized?

3. What number of War Service Homes in each State has been built in—

(a) the capital cities;

(b) other parts of the State?

Mr. RODGERS.—The desired particulars are being obtained.

WHEAT POOL INQUIRY.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Can the Acting Prime Minister give me any idea when I may be able to bring forward for debate the notice of motion which I have on the business-paper proposing an inquiry into the Wheat Pools? In view of the wide-spread feeling existing throughout the country, is it not his opinion that there should be an investigation of the kind?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I cannot, at this moment, fix a date for the discussion of the honorable member's motion. Personally, I do not see what is to be gained by an inquiry of the nature indicated. The Wheat Pools are State matters, and only in the remotest degree do they affect the Commonwealth.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The Commonwealth has been interested in every one of the Pools, as the Minister knows.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Interested this year, for instance, in the matter of arranging finances. But the Commonwealth has nothing whatever to do with the administrative activities of the Wheat Board this year.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I mean during the past five years.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The same remark applies in regard to the other years. The matter has been controlled by the State Governments; and, really, I object to the Commonwealth being called upon to take over responsibilities which are not ours. We have enough of our own.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

MENTALLY AFFLICTED SOLDIERS.

Mr. LISTER.—About a fortnight ago, I asked questions in this House regarding the ultimate home to be provided for certain returned soldiers who have been mentally afflicted, and the Assistant Minister for Repatriation gave me to understand that provision was being made by the Commonwealth Government for the care of these men. Since the House met this morning, I have been informed, over the telephone, that instructions have been issued to the officials at Mont Park Hospital that, on the first of next month, the control of that institution is to be handed over to the State authorities. In the course of my questions, I explained to the Minister the disabilities under which these unfortunates would be placed should they be transferred to State control. I wish to know whether it is a fact that the transfer is to be made; and, if so, how it coincides with the assurance given me by the Minister only a comparatively few days ago.

Mr. RODGERS.—I know nothing, personally, of such an instruction. The matter has not been brought under my notice, nor has my authority been sought or given. I repeat the assurance which I gave the honorable member previously, namely, that an arrangement has been made by the Commonwealth Government with the State Government for the segregation and special care of all mental cases in the Hospital. I know of no change of policy under which mental cases are to be transferred to the direct care of the State. The Commonwealth accepts full responsibility for the permanent care of all mental cases.

Mr. LISTER.—The Minister, in reply to my questions a fortnight ago—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. J. M. Chanter).—Order! The honorable member may not continue to question a Minister upon the same subject-matter as has just been dealt with.

PROPERTY OF GERMAN NATIONALS.

Mr. LISTER asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

1. Will he inform the House whether the Government have adopted the principle of the Clearing House for the settlement of debts as

against the future indemnity to be paid by Germany as set out in the Peace Treaty?

2. What steps have been taken in the Commonwealth to put such policy into effect?

3. Has the property of German nationals in Australia in the possession of the Public Trustee been realized, and to what extent; and what remains to be realized?

4. What is the amount of the credit in respect of the German property taken possession of by the Public Trustee as against the indemnity due by Germany to Australia?

5. What will be the total amount of the credit to be given to Australia by the realization of properties belonging to German nationals in Australia?

6. What steps have been taken to advise the British Government of the policy of the Commonwealth Government?

Mr. GREENE.—The information is being obtained, so far as is possible.

THE CENSUS.

Mr. WISE.—The honorable member for South Sydney (Mr. Riley) asked yesterday when we were likely to have the census return of the population in each State. I have made inquiry, and have ascertained that it is anticipated that the preliminary figures will be available for the whole of Australia by the end of this month.

TARIFF.

In Committee of Ways and Means:

Consideration resumed from 19th May (*vide* page 8577).

DIVISION IV.—AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND GROCERIES.

Item 100—

Tea—(A) In packets not exceeding 20 lbs. net weight, per lb., 1d.;

(B) N.e.i., free.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [11.17].—Tea is admitted free of duty, except in respect of that which comes into Australia in packages. There is very little of the latter, however. The latest official returns show that only 341,000 lbs. entered the Commonwealth in that form—which is an insignificant item compared with the total importations of about 56,000,000 lbs.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Why should any tea come in in packages?

Mr. GREGORY.—If certain people desire to make a specialty of importing tea in that form, and are agreeable to pay the duty thereon, well and good; and

the honorable member may move, if he wishes, to increase the duty.

Mr. GREENE.—The importations in packages consist probably of ships' stores and the like consumed along the Australian coast.

Mr. GREGORY.—The tea which we imported from within the Empire, according to the latest official returns covering one financial year, was distributed as follows:—From Ceylon, about 20,750,000 lbs.; from Hong Kong, 55,000 lbs.; and from India, 8,800,000 lbs. From China, we imported 928,000 lbs.; from Java, 26,000,000 lbs.; and from Japan, 360,000 lbs. Those figures reveal that a tremendous proportion of the tea imported from outside the Empire is grown in Java, while almost the whole of that obtained from within the Empire is grown in Ceylon and India. Nowadays, we see many people waving the flag, and we hear them talking with pride and sympathy of the great and sacrificial deeds of our Empire. Here is an opportunity to show practical sympathy, and to express practical loyalty. India and Ceylon are notable parts of the Empire; they did their worthy share in the Great War. If tea is to come into Australia free of duty from any part of the world, it should be that grown within the Empire; but it is my view that we should secure some revenue from tea imported from foreign countries. Care should be taken that the tea which we may import free shall be grown within the Empire, and not merely despatched from a point within the Empire; otherwise we may get it from Hong Kong, in which part of the Empire, however, it has not been grown. If we imposed a duty of 2d. per lb. on tea grown outside the Empire, we would receive an additional revenue of £360,000. I cannot understand why tea drinkers should not be called upon to pay something in this direction towards the revenue. We have increased the duties in other directions, as we have to pay higher prices for our cigars, whisky, and ales; and there does not appear to be any reason why tea drinkers should not contribute towards the revenue.

Mr. RILEY.—Is the honorable member proposing an increase?

Mr. GREGORY.—Yes. I want it to be clearly understood that I desire to give preference to tea grown within the Em-

pire, which I suggest should be free of duty, and that tea grown outside the Empire should be dutiable at 2d. per lb. I presume my amendment will have to be made in sub-item (b). If the Committee decides to impose a duty on tea grown outside the Empire I should like to know whether the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) will not then have to increase the duty shown in sub-item (a), because that tea would come in in 20-lb. packages at 1d. per lb.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Watkins).—The sub-item would have to be recommitted.

Mr. GREENE.—The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), in proposing a duty on tea grown outside the Empire, should embody the whole, and then go on to say in packages not exceeding 20 lbs. weight, say, 1d., 2d., and 3d., and n.e.i. free, and so on.

Mr. GREGORY.—To test the opinion of the Committee, I move—

That after the word "Tea" the words "grown within the Empire" be inserted.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [11.25].—The item under discussion is of some importance, and, as tea is not produced in the Commonwealth I believe that it should be free of duty. The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) has consistently opposed Protection for certain Australian industries, but is prepared on this item, for revenue purposes, to impose a duty of 2d. per lb.

Mr. GREGORY.—I think the honorable member is wrong in saying that I opposed Protection. I am strongly opposed to a prohibitive Tariff.

Mr. CHARLTON.—There is a difference of opinion on that point. During the whole of the debate I have heard very little from the honorable member in support of our own industries, and I think it will be admitted that he has been doing his best in the direction of Free Trade. In connexion with this particular item, the honorable member not only wishes to maintain the duty of 1d. per lb. on 20-lb. packages, but desires to go further and impose a duty of 2d. per lb. on tea produced outside the Empire. It really comes to this: The honorable member is prepared to support Protection within the Empire, but not within Australia, which is an integral part of the British Empire. He believes in such countries as India being given considera-

tion, but he has not endeavoured to give Protection to the industries within the Commonwealth. Personally, I am opposed to a tax on tea. The honorable member said that those who consumed tea should be prepared to pay for it, but he must not overlook the fact that a large majority of the people in Australia are tea drinkers, and it is generally admitted that, as a beverage, tea is essential in this climate.

Mr. CORSER.—And the Australian people should have the best.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Of course they should. As we cannot produce tea, there is no reason why we should impose a duty, and the Committee would be acting wisely if they removed the duty altogether. It has been admitted that only 341,000 lbs. have been imported in 20-lb. packages, and that is very little. I think we should remove the duty, and allow the Australian people to have tea as cheaply as possible.

Mr. GREENE.—Tea packing is an important industry in Australia.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I believe it is.

Mr. GREENE.—Tea imported in bulk is free, but there is a duty on consignments received in packages.

Mr. CHARLTON.—There may be something in that, as this small duty protects the tea packing industry which gives employment to our people, but that does not get away from the position taken up by the honorable member for Dampier, who wishes to impose a duty of 2d. on tea grown outside the Empire. The Minister for Trade and Customs has said that 1d. duty is sufficient to protect the tea packing industry here, but the honorable member for Dampier wishes to impose an additional tax, which means that tea consumers would have to pay more.

Mr. GREGORY.—My proposal is that tea grown within the Empire shall be admitted free, and that produced in countries outside the Empire shall be dutiable at 2d. per lb.

Mr. CHARLTON.—The honorable member wishes to give Protection to those growing tea within the Empire, but when it comes to protecting Australian industries, he is a strong opponent.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member is hardly fair in making that statement.

Mr. CHARLTON.—If the honorable member will pay a little more attention to the requirements of Australia, he will find that there is ample room for protecting

Australian industries, and if he does that, he will be rendering good service. I oppose the amendment.

Amendment negatived.

Item agreed to.

Items 101—(Vegetables, dried, dry salted, concentrated, compressed, or powdered); item 102 (Vegetables, n.e.i.); and item 103 (Waxes)—agreed to.

Item 104—

Waxes, n.e.i., including stearine, paraffine wax, beeswax, carnauba, ceresine, Japanese or vegetable wax, vegetable wax, n.e.i, per lb., British, 1d.; intermediate, 1d.; general, 1½d.

Mr. WATKINS (Newcastle) [11.32].

—The Committee has agreed to an increase in the duty on candles, and the duty proposed on stearine is quite inconsistent with that decision. If it remains as proposed the stearine will be imported, and for the manufacture of candles will be required only to be moulded here, which is the simplest part of the manufacture, and thus candles made here from imported stearine will come into competition with the candle industry. Stearine is the most important element of these manufactures, and from it by-products are used in connexion with the manufacture of woollens and also of explosives. The manufacture of stearine, therefore is, in a sense, part of our defence system. The most important consideration is the manufacture of stearine in Australia from our own tallow. While we have increased the duty on candles, we have left what is really the main industry still at the mercy of outside competition as before. I am given to understand that wax can be landed here, paying the present duty, at a less rate than it costs to manufacture stearine in Australia. If that is so, it proves the necessity for protecting the manufacture of stearine, in order that we may utilize our own tallow. I ask the Minister for Trade and Customs to look into this matter with a view to putting the duty on this article on a proper basis. The paraffine wax imported into Australia is produced by black labour, and that is an additional reason why we should put our own industry for the manufacture of stearine by white labour on a proper footing. The industry has been established in every State, and for many years has been employing a considerable number of hands, whilst

the production of the article here is of benefit indirectly to numbers of people employed in other industries. The cost of production here has been checked, and the statement that it costs more to produce it than the price at which wax can be imported from other countries can be vouched for. I have no objection to people using wax candles where, in this country, they can be used, but so far as their use in the warmer parts of Australia is concerned there would be no harm done if their local production was wiped out altogether. By protecting the manufacture of stearine we give facilities for the production of oline, which is used in the manufacture of woollen goods and glycerine, which is used in the manufacture of cordite. Before I submit an amendment, I should like to know from the Minister whether he will agree to an increase in the duty on this article on the same basis as the increase agreed to on candles?

Mr. GREENE.—I am looking into the matter at the moment. Perhaps some other honorable members desire to address themselves to the question.

Mr. FRANCIS (Henty) [11.38].—I hope the Minister will agree to the request of the honorable member for Newcastle (Mr. Watkins).

Mr. MATHEWS.—Another convert.

Mr. FRANCIS.—There is no necessity to convert me to belief in protection for the industries of the Commonwealth, I may be a little inclined to go to extremes in the matter of Protection. In the production of stearine we have an essential industry closely connected with the candle industry. The Minister has very wisely consented to give some further protection to the candle industry, and that is appreciated by the manufacturers. The protection of the stearine industry does not mean the protection merely of the production of paraffine wax and stearine, but of other products manufactured from tallow which are of very great importance. If we allow paraffine wax to come in under the present rate of duty, we shall practically wipe out of existence the use of stearine for candle-making purposes. It has already been pointed out that paraffine wax, under the present Tariff, can be brought in at a price below that at which stearine can be manufactured here. We

are out, therefore, to protect the Australian stearine industry. All the money used in the purchase of the material from which stearine is made, and all the wages earned in connexion with the industry, are spent in Australia; whereas the money paid for the purchase of paraffine wax is sent outside Australia; and in the preparation of the wax, black labour is employed. As a White Australia community, we have no desire to encourage black labour. The stearine industry benefits the Australian farmer, the grazier, and the worker. In connexion with the manufacture of stearine candles in Australia, we produce annually 1,000 tons of glycerine, which is largely used in the manufacture of cordite, and for many other purposes; and if we do not protect the stearine industry, we shall have to bring in from overseas large quantities of that by-product. Knowing that thousands of tons of tallow are used annually in the manufacture of stearine candles here, the Minister will, I am sure, agree to increase the duty.

When we increased the duty on candles two days ago, it was said that the result would be an increase in prices—that the people outback have practically no other means of lighting, and would have to pay more for their candles. I have it on the best authority, however, that since we have seen fit to grant the industry a very necessary increased Protection, the manufacturers have decided not only not to increase, but from to-morrow to decrease, by $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per packet, the price of candles to the people outback.

Mr. GABB.—They ought to decrease the price. A reduction is long overdue.

Mr. FRANCIS.—I have it, at all events, on the best authority, that the reduction I have named is to be made. There are some very interesting figures which might, if necessary, be quoted; but I think I need say no more to convince the Minister of the wisdom of protecting the stearine industry by increasing the duty on paraffine wax to the extent of an additional 1d. per lb.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [11.45].—This matter was brought under my notice quite recently, and I have been looking into it. The object sought to be achieved in

arranging the duties on candles and wax has been, as far as possible, to protect the manufacturers of stearine candles as against the wax candle. If honorable members will compare the item relating to candles with that now under discussion, they will see that the arrangement hitherto has been such that the duty on wax has been slightly below the duty on candles. There has been a difference of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. We have now raised the duty on candles to $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. I appreciate the arguments which have been put forward as to the necessity for a slightly higher duty on paraffine wax, inasmuch as it can be brought here and moulded directly into candles without any further process of manufacturing. In that way, it must become a serious competitor with candles manufactured from the Australian raw material, unless we give an additional protection to the local stearine industry by imposing an additional duty. It seems to me, however, that the same balance as between the paraffine wax and the paraffine candles—that is a difference of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb.—should be maintained. That, in the circumstances, is just. I therefore move—

That the Item be amended by adding the following: “and on and after 21st May, 1921:—

“104.—Waxes—

- (A) Paraffine wax, per lb.: British Preferential Tariff, 1d.; Intermediate Tariff, $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.; General Tariff, 2d.
- (B) N.e.i., including stearine, beeswax, carnauba, ceresine, Japanese or vegetable wax, vegetable wax, per lb.: British Preferential Tariff, 1d.; Intermediate Tariff, 1d.; General Tariff, $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Does that mean that wax coming from Mesopotamia would be dutiable at only 1d. per lb.?

Mr. GREENE.—No; it would come in at 2d. per lb. That, I think, will meet the whole position. It retains the balance that has hitherto existed under the Tariff as between the wax and the finished article. At the same time, it will give an additional protection against paraffine wax, which is the competitor of our stearine candle.

Mr. WATKINS.—Paraffine wax can hardly be said to be the raw material of a big industry. It comes in ready to be moulded into candles.

Mr. GREENE.—There have been no complaints up to now, and, so far as I

can see, my proposals adequately meet the position. However, I have been asked to take vegetable waxes out of this item, and in item 103 special provision has been made that vegetable waxes for manufacturing purposes, as prescribed by the departmental by-laws, are admitted free. This, I think, fully meets all the difficulties of the situation.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [11.50].—I do not see why we should have any care at all for paraffine wax or the countries from which it is imported. We shall never be short of tallow in Australia for the manufacture of stearine. In any case, candles made from paraffine wax are neither suitable nor desirable in Australia. I remember some thirteen years ago, when this question was before us, the "poor miner" was trotted out, but certainly paraffine wax candles are not suitable for his purposes.

Mr. WATKINS.—The miner cannot use them.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Exactly. The primary producer to-day is getting more for tallow fat in Australia than for that which he exports; taking into consideration the cost of transit from here to the Old Country, there is nearly £8 difference.

Mr. GREGORY.—But if the industry does not require the protection and the price has been reduced, why increase the duty?

Mr. MATHEWS.—For the reason that wax can be landed at 4½d., and if we got our tallow for nothing we could not produce paraffine wax at that price in Australia. The primary producer, a very good man in his way, is, after all, only a section of the community, but he seems inclined to "cut off his nose to spite his face." Some representatives in this chamber know that the primary producer would distinctly gain by an increased duty—they know it, but, at the same time, they do not seem to believe it. Under the circumstances, I think the Minister might make the duty 2½d., because it is no use trying to compete with paraffine wax imported from the Straits Settlements, or other countries where labour and material are cheap.

Mr. JACKSON (Bass) [11.55].—I support the suggestion that the duty on paraffine wax be 2½d. Last year we voted

about £7,000,000 for defence purposes. It seems to me that such a vote is of very little use if we do not manufacture in this country the raw material for our ammunition; this is an item which affords an opportunity to encourage the manufacture of glycerine, so necessary in this connexion. It has been pointed out that, generally speaking, paraffine wax is not at all necessary in the manufacture of candles, but that the manufacture of stearine candles is of great benefit to the primary producer, and furnishes a commodity which Australia requires and uses. If we do not prohibit the importation of paraffine wax, we should at least impose a substantial duty.

Sir ROBERT BEST (Kooyong) [11.57].—If I thought there was the remotest possibility of the stearine industry suffering by reason of the proposals of the Minister, I should not be found supporting them. I have discussed the matter fully with the honorable gentleman, and I regard his proposals as fair and reasonable. We have to decide whether candles shall be made from stearine or paraffine wax, and to assure ourselves that there is no possibility of the stearine industry suffering by reason of importations. The Minister, as I say, has gone into the matter, and I agree with him that there is no possibility of the industry suffering if his present proposals are accepted. There will be an increase in the duty on the wax and another increase on the finished paraffine wax candles, and there is an increase of the duty on candles made from stearine, so that, under all the circumstances, the balance is maintained and the industry is fully protected.

Mr. FRANCIS (Henty) [11.58].—I am not at all convinced that the stearine industry does not need further protection, and the suggestion that paraffine wax may come in and compete on equal terms with our stearine or tallow seems quite out of place. This stearine industry, and all the industries based on the manufacture of tallow, are essentially Australian. The honorable member for Bass (Mr. Jackson) has put the case very clearly, and there is no doubt that in all these matters we ought to keep our defence requirements in view. If there is any item in the Tariff that needs protection I should say it was this one; and the increase in duty should be at least 1d., in which direction I am prepared to move.

Mr. WATKINS (Newcastle) [11.59].—I would like the Minister to agree to an increase in the duty. As I previously mentioned, stearine is in a different position from any other raw material; because, so far as I understand the position, imported paraffine wax practically represents the finished article, save the moulding of the candles.

Mr. GREGORY.—I do not think the debate should be carried on without a quorum.—[*Quorum formed.*]

Mr. WATKINS.—I was about to point to the value of the stearine as a key industry for defence purposes. In the manufacture of stearine candles in Australia the annual production of glycerine amounts to 1,000 tons, which is sufficient to make 2,000 tons of cordite. This is sold to our explosive and ammunition works, and during the war, besides supplying our own requirements, a large quantity was placed at the disposal of the British Government. If the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. increase is not sufficient, I would like the Minister to consider the advisability of advancing the duty.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [12.3].—Two requests were made to me originally by the candle manufacturers. They asked for an additional 1d. on candles, and an additional 1d. on wax. In this Tariff I have given them a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. on candles, and I am prepared to give them $\frac{1}{2}$ d. on wax, which will maintain the balance sought in their requests. I have looked into this matter carefully, and I think I am advising the Committee properly when I say that, in my judgment, $\frac{1}{2}$ d. is fair Protection. It represents a Protection for the stearine industry, as against paraffine wax, of £18 13s. 4d. per ton. I think that, in the circumstances, what I am doing is right.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

DIVISION V.—TEXTILES, BELTS, AND FURS, AND MANUFACTURES THEREOF, AND ATTIRE.

Item 105—

	British Preferential Tariff.	Intermediate Tariff.	General Tariff.
Piece Goods,* viz. :—			
* DEFINITION OF PIECE GOODS.—When material is defined by selvedge or by pattern for cutting up into separate articles, and is not elsewhere specified, it is not to be considered Piece Goods but as dutiable under the heading applying to the article into which it is designed to be made. Tasselled, Whipped (with or without loops), or Taped Curtain material, when not defined for cutting up, is to be considered Piece Goods.			
(A) (1) Cotton, Linen, and other piece goods, n.e.i.; Oil Baize not containing wool ad val.	Free	5 per cent.	15 per cent.
(2) Calico, for bag making, as prescribed by Departmental By-laws ad val.	Free	Free	Free
(B) Cotton and Linen Piece Goods defined for cutting up for the manufacture of hemmed or hemstitched Handkerchiefs, Serviettes, Tablecloths, Towels, or Window Blinds, as prescribed by Departmental By-laws ad val.	5 per cent.	10 per cent.	20 per cent.
(C) Piece Goods, n.e.i., other than of wool or silk, suitable for human apparel, or to be worn in connexion with the human body, having on one or both sides a teased, treated, combed, fluffed, or raised nap or surface in imitation of or resembling flannel in feel or appearance ad val.	Free	5 per cent.	15 per cent.
(D) Silk, or containing silk or having silk worked thereon, except piece goods enumerated in sub-item (E) ad val.	15 per cent.	25 per cent.	30 per cent.
(H) Velvets, Velvetens, Plushes, Sealette and Cloths imitating furs, Astrachans; Lace for Attire; Lace Flouncings; Millinery and Dress Nets; Veilings; Embroideries in the piece; Italians containing wool; Tucked Linens or Cottons ad val.	15 per cent.	25 per cent.	30 per cent.
(K) Woollen, or containing wool, n.e.i. ad val.	30 per cent.	40 per cent.	45 per cent.

MR. GREGORY (Dampier) [12.7].—I understand the Minister intends to submit certain amendments, but before he does so, I should like to make a few general remarks in regard to the position, and to point to the big increase in duties on textiles generally.

MR. CHARLTON.—I should like your ruling, Mr. Chairman, as to whether the honorable member will be in order in dealing with the general heading to the division, instead of confining himself to the items.

MR. GREGORY.—We are starting on a new Division.

MR. CHARLTON.—But the honorable member is dealing with the heading to the division, and not the particular item before the Committee.

The **TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (**Mr. Bamford**).—I must uphold the point of order raised by the honorable member for Hunter. The honorable member for Dampier must confine himself to the item.

MR. GREGORY.—Very well, Mr. Chairman, I shall endeavour to do so. I direct attention to the fact that there is a general increase of 10 per cent. on piece goods imported from outside the Empire.

MR. GREENE.—We have given increased preference to the British Empire of 10 per cent.

MR. GREGORY.—There is an increase from 5 per cent. to 15 per cent. on piece goods imported from outside the Empire. Honorable members should consider the probable effect of this upon the people of Australia. In a matter of this sort three parties are deeply interested, the protected employing capitalist, the employees in the protected trades, and the general public. Friends of the protected employing capitalist have been conspicuous during the debate on the Tariff.

The **TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN**.—I am afraid the honorable member is again getting away from the item.

MR. GREGORY.—A great deal of latitude is usually allowed during the discussion of the items in a Tariff. No honorable member can have very much respect for the manner in which the Tariff has been debated up to the present as item after item has gone through without even the slightest debate. Upon further consideration, I think that probably it would be better if I deferred my remarks until we are considering woollens, as I want to be

able to speak generally on the high cost of living, and to quote from reports submitted by the Inter-State Commission. I want to show how the woollen manufacturers of this country have unduly exploited the people. However, I shall take a better opportunity of doing so.

MR. FLEMING (Robertson) [12.10].—I have always been strongly of the opinion that we cannot do too much in the direction of encouraging trade between the various portions of the Empire, and particularly with Great Britain. The Minister proposes to admit cotton, linen, and other piece goods, *n.e.i.*, free from Great Britain, as against 5 per cent. under the intermediate Tariff, and 15 per cent. under the general Tariff, but I would like to have Free Trade within the Empire. Great Britain depends very largely upon the manufacture of cotton goods, and we ought to do all we can to give it every possible advantage in that respect, particularly in view of the fact that since the war the United States of America have been making a powerful attempt to wrest from the Old Country its supremacy in the cotton trade. It is our duty to support the Motherland, not only in times of war, but also in times of peace. Because I feel that this is our duty, and also because I am absolutely convinced that the establishment of Free Trade within the British Empire would advance, not only the interests of the Empire as a whole, but also those of Australia, I want to see the adoption of this principle as far as possible. Of course, we should not go to extremes in anything in politics. One begins to get into trouble at once by adopting absolute Free Trade or absolute prohibition. I advocate neither course, but simply claim that we should give the Old Land, and the various Dominions, the greatest form of preference, approaching as close as possible to Free Trade, with safeguards which could easily be adjusted to prevent the products of coloured labour from overwhelming those of white workers. Anything we can do to help Great Britain, in the cotton trade, will assist it to maintain its supremacy in that trade, and also its command of the mercantile marine. I hope the Minister, right through these textile items, will give as far as possible a free list to Great Britain.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [12.15].—In these items I have done a great deal in the direction suggested by the honorable member. I have raised the British preference from 5 per cent. to 15 per cent. Cotton, linen, and other piece goods are free, 5 per cent. and 15 per cent. in their respective columns, as against free and 5 per cent. in the previous Tariff. I have increased the duty on cotton and linen piece goods defined for cutting up from free, and 5 per cent. to 5 per cent., 10 per cent., and 20 per cent.

Mr. FLEMING.—But why is it necessary to impose a duty of 5 per cent. against Great Britain on cotton and linen piece goods defined for cutting up?

Mr. GREENE.—There is a little difference between that class of goods and cotton, linen, and other piece goods, n.e.i., and I thought that when they came in defined for cutting up it would be an advantage to get a little revenue out of them. However, there is in that item a preference of 15 per cent. to Great Britain. In the sub-items the same preference will be found. I propose to make an alteration to sub-item D, covering silk, which will go back to some extent on the general intention to give a preference of 15 per cent. to Great Britain, the reason being that the exportation of silk from that country is practically negligible, and the giving of a substantial preference to British goods would not be effective. Where there is no doubt as to Great Britain's ability to manufacture and supply our needs in regard to textiles, felts, and furs, I have throughout increased the preferential Tariff in their favour from 5 per cent. to 15 per cent. I have given her *carte blanche* to do what I recognise she can do—give us all we want; and if she cannot do it on a 15 per cent. preference she ought to be able to do so. There is a departure from that principle in regard to calico for bag-making, because Great Britain does not manufacture that particular class of goods, and to give her a preference in that respect would simply mean putting an unnecessary tax on our own people. For that reason I have taken off the whole of the duty on calico for bag-making.

Mr. FLEMING.—It is highly necessary to do so in the interests of our export trade.

Mr. GREENE.—That is so. The flour we export goes away very largely in calico bags. That is why I have removed the duty. The effect of an amendment that I am going to move will be to leave tubular cotton piece goods exactly where they are in the Tariff, in so far as they are not used for the manufacture of articles of clothing. At the present time there is a certain class of tubular cotton piece goods coming into the country which are simply chopped up, and which can thus be very easily converted into articles of clothing. These goods are coming into competition with an established industry, and therefore it seems desirable that we should make the alteration to which I invite the Committee to agree.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [12.21].—I ask the Minister why yarns, sewing cottons, and silks have been omitted from this division of the Tariff? The item of yarns is a key item for textile manufactures, and therefore should have appeared at the head of the textile division. It should be dealt with before we determine the duty upon cloths and attire. A similar remark is applicable to sewing cottons, without which the whole of the textiles would be practically valueless. Why these articles have been placed in items 392 and 393 of the schedule is beyond my comprehension. There is one matter connected with this particular item which requires some explanation at the hands of the Minister. The ways of the Customs Department are peculiar at the very best of times. How the officers of that Department arrive at their decisions I have been endeavouring, without success, to understand for the past twenty years. It is no wonder that our importers become confused by the way in which duties are manipulated. As a matter of fact, certain goods which are imported may be placed under different headings of the Tariff, and the authorities are thus able to twist them to suit their own convenience. I know of instances in which an officer has decided that the duty payable upon a particular article was so and so, and after the goods have gone into consumption the authorities have come along and determined upon the payment of a higher duty. It is for this reason that I desire something definite. In this schedule it is proposed that leather cloth shall be dutiable under sub-item II (3) of the item which we are now discussing, at 5

per cent. British Preferential Tariff, 10 per cent. Intermediate Tariff, and 15 per cent. General Tariff. Then, under item 130A, it is proposed that duck waterproofed by treatment with any substance shall be dutiable at 15 per cent., 20 per cent., and 25 per cent. respectively. As oil baize, leather cloth and upholstery ducks are practically identical, there will thus be three rates of duty upon similar articles. If they were placed under the one heading all difficulties of classification would disappear. I am not complaining of the duties which it is proposed to levy upon these goods. But every importer should know exactly what he has to pay upon them. It would simplify matters, both for the Customs authorities and the importers, if all these goods were subject to one duty.

Mr. JOWETT.—What are the items to which the honorable member refers?

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Items 130 and 105A.

Mr. JOWETT.—Is leather material the same thing as upholstery duck?

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Yes. Here are samples which prove that they are the same thing, the only difference being that one article is superior to the other.

Mr. GREENE.—It is the use to which these various articles are put that largely determines the duty which is charged upon them.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Suppose that I imported a suit of clothes, would the Minister charge the same duty upon it as he would charge upon the tweed of which the suit was made?

Mr. GREENE.—No, no.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Why cannot all these articles be subject to the one rate of duty? That is all for which the importers ask.

Mr. GREGORY.—Oil baize is to be admitted free.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Yes, but that is different from the other two articles which I have mentioned. Moreover, none of these goods are made in Australia.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [12.29].—I should like to amend the item so as to make it read "Cotton, linen, flaxen and other piece goods, n.e.i.; oil baize and upholstery duck", &c. I am advised that all these articles are used for the one purpose, and consequently they should all be

included in the same category. I think that the three items which have been enumerated by the honorable member for Maranoa (Mr. James Page) should be subject to the one duty. Now there are three heads of classification—certain articles, such as oil baize, are admitted free; others are classified as leather cloth; and others again as upholstered duck. This diversity of classification creates an enormous amount of trouble for importers as well as for the Customs officials, and must also increase the cost of administration. I do not ask for an abolition of duty, but I think that an arrangement might be made which would lessen the difficulties that are complained of. Week after week decisions in regard to classification are made and published, so that they fill whole books. According to an article published in a Tasmanian newspaper in 1911, there were then 14,000 fluctuating decisions. The simpler the Tariff schedule, the better for the community.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [12.33].—There is great difficulty in classifying some of these articles, but were I to agree to what has been suggested by the honorable member, I should please the importer, and act contrary to the wish of the Committee in regard to the protection of Australian industry.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—What Australian industry could be affected?

Mr. GREENE.—Leather cloth—not the light material that is stamped "leather cloth," but an article well-known in the trade—is dutiable because it competes seriously with our own leathers. The acceptance of the honorable member's suggestion would tend to prejudice the waterproofing industry here. Canvas and duck imported from the United Kingdom are admitted free, and used locally for waterproofing material. Oil baize is not made here.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Cannot it be used in the same way as leather cloth?

Mr. GREENE.—No. It is much lighter than leather cloth; the latter being used for upholstering furniture, and vehicles, and in other ways which bring it into direct competition with our own leathers.

Mr. GREGORY.—These articles are not manufactured in Australia.

Mr. GREENE.—The proposed wide definition includes articles that are made here. Great care has to be exercised in the framing of definitions, and in the Department we thresh out every matter carefully so that no loop-hole may be left for importation prejudicial to local industries. The task is an extremely difficult one, but we have done our best, and have succeeded fairly well. Any change in the items takes a considerable time to work out in all its details, but definite decisions are published from time to time which make lines of demarcation that, after a little while, the trade gets to know and to act on. What the honorable member proposes is too far-reaching.

Mr. GREGORY.—If I do not press my proposal, will the Minister have the matter reconsidered if necessary?

Mr. GREENE.—The Customs Department desires, in its own interests, to simplify definitions as much as possible. We do not wish for friction between our officials and the public; what we desire is satisfactory and smooth working. But all proposals of the kind I am discussing must be carefully considered before action can be taken.

Mr. GREGORY.—I shall not press my proposal; but I should like to know why yarns occupy the place in the Tariff in which they stand.

Mr. GREENE.—When we were going through the Tariff, my officers stressed the importance of not disturbing its general arrangement more than was absolutely necessary; and, therefore, yarns were left where they have always been, although the duties were altered.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—What about sewing cotton?

Mr. GREENE.—Its position in the Tariff was left undisturbed. I move—

That the following sub-item be inserted after sub-item (A):—

(AA) Cotton piece goods, knitted, in tubular form, on and after 21st May, 1921:—

- (1) For the manufacture of goods other than apparel, as prescribed by departmental By-laws, ad val.—British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 15 per cent.
- (2) Other ad val.—British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [12.42].—I move—

That sub-item (D) be amended by adding the following words:—

“and on and after 21st May, 1921, ad val.—British, 15 per cent.; intermediate, 15 per cent.; general, 20 per cent.”

This is a revenue duty; but we thought that silk was more or less a luxury, or, at any rate, an article on which we might fairly impose taxation. The preference to Great Britain is not effective to any extent, because silk is not manufactured there. So what I am proposing is, in effect, to revert to the old duties in respect of silk piece goods. These latter are the raw material for some of our own industries—ties, parasols, and the like. We found that the duty under the general Tariff was so close to the duty upon apparel that there was not sufficient margin. I think, however, that the proposal to restore the former impost on silk goods will prove satisfactory to local manufacturers who work on the imported raw material.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [12.46].—I am pleased that the Minister has proposed his amendment, although, in the interests of those who manufacture from the raw material—that is, imported silk piece goods—I do not think the suggestion goes far enough.

Mr. GREENE.—It will give our manufacturers ample protection.

Mr. CHARLTON.—The amendment, if agreed to, will certainly improve matters. I do not intend to move a further amendment, but I wish the Minister would consent to the imposition of a duty of 10 per cent. only upon silk imported for the manufacture of ties, parasols, sunshades, and umbrellas. I understand that there are fifteen tie-making establishments in Australia, and these employ a large number of hands. I ask the Minister to give my proposition serious consideration.

Mr. FRANCIS (Henty) [12.50].—The Minister for Customs has proposed a substantial reduction which should have considerable effect upon the tie and umbrella manufacturing industry. In my view, however, the duty upon the raw material could have been still further reduced. Industries which are prosperous to-day may not be in such good circumstances twelve months hence; and this

Tariff, of course, is to stand for a long time. England imports her silk free from Italy and France, and has a great advantage in competing here with Australian makers of silk ties and umbrellas. I do not object to fair competition; but we need to see that it is fair, and that we are not injuring a promising Australian enterprise for lack of reasonable encouragement. While the Minister has been generous I would like to see a slight reduction even upon the rates under the old Tariff. I have been informed that, unless Australian silk tie-makers—who deal in a raw material which Australia cannot produce—can secure increased production, or be given greater protection against overseas competition, they will be unable to satisfactorily establish themselves. I ask the Minister to postpone consideration of this item in order that he may go more deeply into the matter of local manufacture from English silk piece goods, and, perhaps, agree to an additional 5 per cent. reduction.

Mr. GREENE.—Not another cent!

Sitting suspended from 12.57 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [2.15].—When we were discussing the amendment moved by the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) before the luncheon adjournment, I was under the impression that it was a very reasonable one in order to meet the position. But since that, from information I have received, I believe the Minister would be acting wisely if he inserted a sub-item to deal with ties, parasols, sunshades, and umbrellas under departmental by-laws. It has been pointed out to me that some such amendment as this is necessary if our industries are to exist, which they cannot do if the Minister's amendment is adopted.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—They all say that.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I know that, and I intend giving some of the reasons which have been submitted to me. It is only right that we should look into these matters to see if the case submitted by interested parties is worthy of consideration or not.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—We should not take their word.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Exactly. I think in this respect it will be admitted that I have been endeavouring to fall in with the

Minister's views, because he has adopted a very fair attitude, and has treated suggestions with consideration. The Minister proposes to increase the British preferential Tariff on silk introduced into Australia for general purposes, which, of course, can be considered a luxury, from 15 to 20 per cent. The proposed rate is evidently for the purpose of obtaining revenue. I do not take any exception to the present rate, and I do not think I would have objected if it were 30 per cent. The position taken up by manufacturing industries in Australia is that silk is used for articles of utility that must be obtained by all sections of the community, and when we consider that phase of the question we have to endeavour, as far as possible, to protect our own industries.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—What does the honorable member suggest?

Mr. CHARLTON.—That the Minister should agree to an addition to sub-item *no*, covering silk for manufacturing ties, parasols, sunshades, and umbrellas under departmental by-laws, making the rate of duty less than on other articles. That is all I require, because our own industries are not in a position to compete with imported articles.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I think they are.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I can contradict that statement, because I have been informed that the pre-war Tariff on raw material was, under the British preferential Tariff, 10 per cent., and 15 per cent. on foreign silks. I understood from the Minister that he was amending the rates so that they would be equivalent to pre-war rates, but that cannot be so, as he proposes increasing the British preferential Tariff to 20 per cent. I am informed that the great bulk of the trade done by Australian manufacturers was in lines at two prices, namely, 12s. per dozen and 20s. per dozen. Buying with the greatest care, and being extremely keen over each item required in the manufacture, they were, in the case of the 12s. per dozen lines, just able to beat the imported ties by 6d. per dozen; but, in the case of their 20s. line, more often than otherwise they were imported at 18s. 6d. per dozen, which was 1s. 6d. per dozen less than the Australian tie. Their only reason for getting trade, at this price was because smaller quan-

tities could be bought, and they were on the spot to deliver at once. Several of the manufacturers at this time imported ties, and were able to sell them profitably in competition with goods of their own manufacture. As this happened with a Tariff of 15 per cent. on foreign raw material, it requires no great foresight to understand what will happen if we are asked to pay 30 per cent. on our foreign silks, which form 80 per cent. of the trade. I ask the Minister to consider this matter, with a view to charging a lower duty on the silk we use in manufacture in Australia, and which thus affords employment to our own people.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [2.20].—This matter has been before me on many occasions, and the amendment I have moved is the result of the consideration that has been given to the whole question. If honorable members will turn to the Tariff, and compare the pre-war rates with those I am now proposing as between the rate on silk-piece goods and that rate on apparel, they will find that there is a difference between the apparel rate and the piece-good rate of 25 per cent. which has been retained. The 25 per cent. in my opinion gives an ample protection for the manufacturer of ties.

Mr. MATHEWS.—But they deny that.

Mr. GREENE.—Honorable members must remember that the high apparel rate is on the finished article. There is not a further 25 per cent. difference, but there is 25 per cent. greater protection on the finished article than on the raw material. I do not know, but I think it would be fair to assume that the finished article, generally speaking, would be worth double the price of piece goods, which means that there is an actual protection of 50 per cent.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Minister must not forget that he is going to ask the Committee to impose a duty of 60 per cent. on the parasols when we are dealing with that item.

Mr. GREENE.—I do not propose to do that. The rates which I have provided in the Tariff have been carefully considered, and are in my opinion ample to give the necessary protection to manufacturers. Personally, I am not prepared to give any further concessions in this particular direction as it seems that it is

ample protection as to British goods, and the rate is still greater on goods coming from France and Italy.

Mr. GREGORY.—What does the Minister propose?

Mr. GREENE.—That the rates shall be 15 per cent. and 20 per cent. Having looked into the matter very carefully, I believe that what we are doing is a fair thing in the circumstances.

Mr. FRANCIS (Henty) [2.24].—The 25 per cent. margin mentioned by the Minister for Trade and Customs (**Mr. Greene**) is in reference to ties imported from foreign countries.

Mr. GREENE.—That is not so, as the rate in the case of foreign countries is 30 per cent.

Mr. FRANCIS.—I am referring to the difference between the apparel rate and the silk piece rate. Under the amendment the British preferential rate is to be 25 per cent., and the foreign rate 35 per cent. It must be remembered that 80 per cent. of the imported ties are made by British manufacturers from foreign silk, and they enter the Commonwealth with preference over foreign made goods, so that the manufacturers consider that there is a margin of only 10 per cent.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—That is not so.

Mr. GREENE.—It is rubbish.

Mr. FRANCIS.—If honorable members know as much about the tie industry as they think they do they will vote for the duties being restored to the pre-war rates. I was under the impression when the Minister very generously amended the rates to 15 and 20 per cent. that we were going back to the pre-war rates, but I find that the position is as stated by the honorable member for Hunter (**Mr. Charlton**), the duties, in those days, being 10 per cent. and 15 per cent.

Mr. GREENE.—If the honorable member will compare the apparel rates with the piece-goods rates he will find the balance is the same under the proposal I am submitting.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—But it is an increase.

Mr. FRANCIS.—Exactly. Even if we were paying 15 per cent. in those days it has been altered to 20 per cent. Surely with the protection that this industry is asking for—particularly when the material cannot be manufactured in this country—there is no one who would

support actual prohibition by refusing the concession that the people in the tie and umbrella industry are asking for. There are certain subsidiary items, such as silver tops, which are used in the manufacture of umbrellas and parasols, and if they come in as manufactured articles they are cheaper than they would be if introduced in bulk for manufacture here. I do not say that the tie or umbrella industry is of great importance at this juncture, but if the Government will give the industry sufficient encouragement the manufacturers are prepared to invest more capital in it.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—They have protection to the extent of 25 per cent.

Mr. FRANCIS.—It is all very well for honorable members to criticise my suggestions and to smile, but even if small amounts are invested in these industries we should give them some consideration.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The honorable member would give any mortal thing.

Mr. FRANCIS.—I may be prepared to concede more than the honorable member, and I will show him the force of my argument before I have finished.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The honorable member is doing the industry a lot of harm.

Mr. FRANCIS.—The honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Foster) may have been a member of this Chamber for a very long time, but I intend to exercise my rights, and place the position before the Committee as I see it. I represent as many people, and perhaps more, than the honorable member does. We want articles that cannot be manufactured in this country to come here, but we must give our industries an opportunity to compete, not only with Great Britain, but with foreign countries.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—On the other hand, the honorable member must not lose sight of the revenue point of view. He must remember that silk ties are a luxury after all.

Mr. FRANCIS.—Umbrellas are not a luxury, but a real necessity. I do not know why poor people should not be able to wear a silk tie as others do. If these articles are regarded as luxuries then I see no reason why we should not protect the manufacturer of luxuries in

this country as against their manufacture elsewhere.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Does the honorable member desire to wipe out the duty altogether?

Mr. FRANCIS.—Yes, I go as far as that in the case of articles that cannot be manufactured in Australia. I am as good a Protectionist as any member of the Committee, and I again ask the Minister to put the duties on the raw material used in the tie industry and the umbrella industry back to the pre-war rates. If he does so he will be doing something to assist Australian industries.

Mr. LAZZARINI (Werriwa) [2.32].—I support the proposed reduction of the duty on piece silk imported for the manufacture of these articles. Piece silk is not manufactured in Australia at all. The idea that silk ties are a luxury is fallacious. A silk tie from the economical point of view is the cheapest tie that any man can wear. I have on a silk tie which I have been wearing for two years. If I wore cotton ties I should have had to purchase twenty in the same time. Silk piece goods made here into ladies' blouses represent the most economical apparel that ladies can wear. To argue that a duty on the raw material of these industries is justifiable because silk ties are a luxury is merely to cloud the issue by suggesting that the Government desire to tax the rich and leave the poor untaxed. Silk piece goods are manufactured here into articles of utility and the most economical apparel that can be worn. There is no factory in Australia making silk piece goods that are made up into ties, and if the tie industry is to be developed the duty must be removed from the silk piece goods used in the industry. The Minister (Mr. Greene) argued some time ago that bulk tea should be admitted free to Australia because it was put into packages in this country, and the thing to do was to make the packages dutiable. In the same way I say that silk piece goods, used in the manufacture of ties, should be admitted free, or at as low a duty as possible, because, no doubt, the Treasurer must consider the revenue aspect of the Tariff. If that is the intention in this case, why does not the Minister for Trade and Customs say definitely that he is introducing a revenue Tariff, and cut out all the nonsense he has

talked about building up Australian industries?

Mr. GREENE.—I have said so in distinct terms.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—No; the contention has been that in this case the Government are taxing a luxury, and I say that it is not a luxury.

Mr. GREENE.—There is a protection of 40 per cent. on the finished article over and above this duty.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—That does not matter. My argument is that the Government are making the people who buy the Australian article, made out of silk piece goods, pay 15 per cent. more than they should be asked to pay for those goods, by imposing a duty of 15 per cent. on the raw material of the articles which they purchase.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—We are getting a little revenue, and are protecting the industry as well.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—It cannot be said that we are protecting the industry by making it pay 15 per cent. duty on the raw material it uses.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [2.37].—I wish that honorable members would consent to go to a division on this item. We have been talking about it for a long time. I have explained the item to the Committee, not once, but half-a-dozen times, and now we have an honorable member, who was not present during the previous discussion, standing up and again repeating that the proposed arrangement of the duties does not protect the local industry. It does. It gives the local industry a protection of 40 per cent. It gives it exactly the same amount of protection that it has had all along.

Mr. MATHEWS.—How does the Minister make out that the protection is 40 per cent.?

Mr. GREENE.—If the honorable member will look at the Tariff he will find that under the proposal I am now making the United Kingdom rate is 15 per cent., the Intermediate rate 15 per cent., and the General Tariff rate 20 per cent. If he will look at item 110 he will find that the United Kingdom rate on apparel is 50 per cent., the Intermediate rate 50 per cent., and the General Tariff rate 55 per cent. Our manufacturers buy foreign silk piece-goods and their com-

petition is with manufactured articles from Great Britain, which are dutiable at 40 per cent. This represents a difference of 20 per cent. Then members must bear in mind that the value of the manufactured article is practically double the value of the raw material.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—Not in ties.

Mr. GREENE.—Yes, it is; I can prove that from the statistics of the Trade and Customs Department. Therefore the protection which the industry is given on the manufactured article is 40 per cent. I say that that is ample. The proof of that statement is that that is the protection which the industry has had all along, and under which it has been built up and has grown to considerable proportions. I am retaining that protection in the case of imports from Great Britain, and have increased it in the case of imports of these goods from foreign countries.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That is of no value at all, because all the imports are from Great Britain.

Mr. GREENE.—I have said that, in regard to ties imported from Great Britain, we are giving an effective protection of 40 per cent.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—No, it is only 20 per cent.

Mr. GREENE.—Does not the honorable member realize that the value of the manufactured article is greater than the value of the raw material?

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That has always been so.

Mr. GREENE.—Just so; and, as I say, we are giving the industry exactly the same amount of protection that it had before. The position, as I see it, is that, inasmuch as the manufactured ties from silk piece-goods are worth double the value of the silk with which they are manufactured, if a protection of 20 per cent. in excess is given on the manufactured article the effective protection must be doubled, and, therefore, it is an effective protection of 40 per cent. that is proposed for this industry. I am not disposed to make any alteration in the item.

Mr. FRANCIS (Henty) [2.43].—I move—

That the amendment be amended by leaving out the rates of duty proposed, and substituting—"British, 10 per cent.; intermediate, 10 per cent.; general, 15 per cent."

I am proposing the rates of the pre-war Tariff on the raw material. I want honorable members to recognise that the silks made into ties come from France and Italy. They are manufactured in the Old Country and when sent out here compete in a disastrous way with the local industry. I hope that the amendment will be agreed to.

Sir ROBERT BEST (Kooyong) [2.44].—I am prepared to take the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) at his word, and I ask him to revert to the same protection as this industry was given before. A difference has been brought about by increasing the duty on the raw material. The Minister is under the impression that by doing so he will increase the revenue, but I do not think he will do anything of the kind.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—He will not decrease it.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—I think that, if anything, he will decrease it. If the Minister is anxious that the people engaged in this industry should have exactly the same protection as they were given before I ask him to put the duty back to the old figure.

Mr. GREENE.—Then I must reduce the apparel rate as well.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—I am talking now about ties only. The tie industry is a big one here, but the general Tariff duty of 55 per cent. is of no value to the local manufacturers, since ties are not imported from foreign countries. Our only competition comes from the Mother Country itself. As we have no silk industry the question is whether we should encourage the development of our tie industry by giving the manufacturers the raw material at a reasonable price. I suggest to the Minister that the original duties of 10 per cent. and 15 per cent. on the raw material would produce quite as much revenue as he is likely to get from the increased duties, and that a reversion to the original duties would also have the effect of substantially increasing the tie industry here. It would enable manufacturers to absorb a large proportion of the trade that is at present catered for by imports. It is true that there is a duty of 40 per cent. on made-up ties from the Mother Country, and that the honorable gentleman has added 20 per cent. to that duty. Nominally, there is a protection of

20 per cent., but practically there is a little more by reason of the greater value of the made-up article. The tie manufacturers, however, had the benefit of that difference before.

Mr. CHARLTON.—As an alternative, would it not be sufficient to increase the duty on the made-up ties?

Sir ROBERT BEST.—I do not think it is necessary to increase the duty on ready-made ties, provided the Minister will agree to allow the raw material to come in at a reasonable rate, and, provided also, that we can arrive at some reasonable compromise with a view to further stimulating the tie-making industry, and enabling our manufacturers to absorb the present trade in imported ties.

Amendment of the amendment negatived.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [2.50].—I move—

That after the word "linens," sub-item (■), the words "tinsel cloths" be inserted.

This alteration is partly an elimination of certain materials which are used only as trimmings, and naturally should fall under item 106B at the same rates of duty. Tinsel cloth is at present included in item 106A, but there is no valid reason, Protectionist or otherwise, for its insertion there at lower duties. No Protectionist principles are involved. The duties on both items are of a purely revenue character, there being no manufacture of any of these lines in Australia. In addition, the respective duties on this item and on item 106B should be identical, so that there should be no confusion between the items when entering goods for duty. One covers "piece goods" only, while the other includes "articles" for similar use, namely, trimmings.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [2.52].—For the moment, I find it difficult to understand what purpose the honorable member (Mr. James Page) is trying to serve. Tinsel cloth and tinsel belting are included in item 106, and are admitted free under the British preferential Tariff, whereas if they were included in item 105E as proposed by the honorable member, they would be dutiable at 15 per cent. I do not know why he wishes to make them dutiable.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I am willing to take the risk if the honorable gentleman will agree to the amendment.

Mr. GREENE.—I cannot see any object to be attained by the amendment. Tinsel has been included in item 106, together with similar goods which are used by dressmakers and others, and I would prefer to leave it as it stands. I do not think there is anything to be gained by the proposed change.

Mr. GREGORY.—It would cure an anomaly.

Mr. GREENE.—The trade will know perfectly well after a little while under which heading the different items fall.

Mr. GREGORY.—But the item as it stands causes difficulty to the trade.

Mr. GREENE.—This matter has never been brought before the Department. Had there been any real need for such a change, we should have heard of it long ago. It seems to me that people very often put up these proposals, without first consulting the Department, in the hope that they will carry them, and that they have some object to serve, of which we know nothing at the time. If we accepted such proposals off-hand, we might suddenly discover that we had done something that we did not wish to do. Unless we have a fair opportunity to look into these technical alterations—and they are very technical in their detail—we should not be asked to make them. We should not be asked off-hand to take a line out of one item and to put it in another when there have been no representations to us in regard to the matter. If there was any grave reason for this change, we should have heard of it long ago. I ask that tinsel cloth and tinsel belting remain in the item in which they now stand.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [2.55].—We find that there are two items dealing practically with the same article. According to the departmental classification, tinsel, which is a metallic artificial silk, comes in under item 105 E, while what is exactly the same kind of thing is classified differently, and comes in under 106 A. I join with the honorable member for Maranoa (Mr. James Page) in asking that both be dealt with in the one item. The amendment means that both will be dutiable, so that no loss of duty is involved in its acceptance. My sole desire is that we shall simplify, as far as possible, the bringing in of goods through the Customs

Department, since any expense incurred in that way must necessarily involve further cost to the people. Without desiring in any way to reflect upon the Department, I must say that it is absolutely autocratic in its methods. The classification in operation this week may be altered next week. One has only to look at the extraordinary classification book issued by the Department to realize the detail involved. I presume a great deal of it is necessary.

Mr. GREENE.—Much of it is unavoidable.

Mr. GREGORY.—No doubt; but my object is, as far as possible, to simplify the Customs procedure, so that every importer may know exactly what duty he has to pay. I am afraid that much of the agitation against the removal of the Seat of Government from Melbourne to Canberra is due to the fact that local merchants and others realize that, while they are able, as at present, to get readily into touch with the Department—and I am not for one moment suggesting anything improper—they have a better chance of having their cases looked into than has a business man in another State who has to interview the Deputy Controller of Customs, who, in turn, is bound by the instructions issued to him under the classification. When several classes of goods are brought out in the one package, the whole parcel has to be opened in order that the goods may be examined and classified. I am not arguing as to whether these goods should be dutiable or not—that is a matter wholly for the Parliament to decide; I simply suggest that the amendment would simplify the Customs procedure in regard to at least one line.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [2.59].—I sympathize with the view which the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) has put. I have not had an opportunity to thoroughly inquire into this proposal, but what I think is at the bottom of it may be briefly stated. There is a provision in the Customs Act that a substitute for any particular article shall come under that article for which it is substituted.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That is so now.

Mr. GREENE.—Quite so.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It is not a very good provision.

Mr. GREENE.—It is a provision which cannot be avoided. I admit that these two articles do look something alike, though one is an artificial silk, with an artificial metallic basis, and the other is a true tinsel, having a small proportion of silk finish with a true metallic base. This artificial silk is probably a copy of the tinsel; and the reason it is put under a different item from tinsel is that it is a substitute for silk, and must, therefore, be rated as silk. These difficulties crop up in administration in a hundred and one different ways. Even if we did what is requested, and changed this from one item to the other, it would only give rise to another set of difficulties of exactly the same kind in the matter of interpretation—difficulties inseparable from the administration of the Customs law. We do our best to meet the requirements of the trade, and, though there have been no representations made up to the present, I shall do whatever lies in my power in that direction.

Mr. GREGORY.—Before the Tariff leaves the Senate, will the Minister meet the representatives of the importers? I am not speaking of Customs agents, who like this sort of thing, because it adds to their work.

Mr. GREENE.—If the importers through their association make definite representations, we shall know exactly what they mean, and where their proposals may lead; then, if as a result, we find any alteration is desirable for the simplification of the law, I shall be delighted to make it, for it will save work to everybody.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [3.4].—I am quite satisfied with the explanation of the Minister. I do not wish the honorable gentleman to think that I desire to defraud the revenue.

Mr. GREENE.—I do not think that for one moment.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Nor should I like the Minister to think I am guilty of sharp practices. My object was simplification. I looked on this as an anomaly, and as such I brought it before the Committee. However, the Minister has now assured us that if the importers can show that an alteration is desirable in their interests, and in the interests of the De-

partment, he will make one. I desire to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment (by **Mr. GREENE**) proposed—

That sub-item (E) be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 21st May, 1921, ad val., British, 15 per cent.; intermediate, 15 per cent.; general, 20 per cent."

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [3.7].—I should like to see greater preference than is now proposed given to the Old Country, and I hope the general duty will not be less than 25 per cent.

Mr. RILEY.—A preference of 5 per cent. is fairly good.

Mr. GREGORY.—I do not agree with the honorable member. I hope that the promises we have been making "all through the piece" to give special consideration to goods from the Old Country will not be departed from.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [3.9].—I am prepared to accept the suggestion made by the honorable member for Dampier (**Mr. Gregory**), and make the general Tariff 25 per cent. Looking at the figures of importations, I see that the bulk of these goods now come from Great Britain. It is true that from elsewhere we get considerable quantities of certain classes or grades which cannot be obtained from Great Britain. I ask leave to amend my amendment by substituting 25 per cent. for 20 per cent. as the general duty.

Amendment amended accordingly, and agreed to.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [3.10].—Does sub-item (F) mean woollen piece-goods?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes.

Mr. GREGORY.—These duties are an increase on the duties imposed by the Tariffs of 1908 and 1914, and I should like to take this opportunity to deal with the position of the woollen industry in Australia. I endeavoured to address myself to this question some time ago, but was ruled out of order; and I take the present opportunity to raise a protest. I feel that, while the war was on, the woollen manufacturers of Australia did not "play the game" so far as this country is concerned, and that remark applies also to the woollen manufacturers of Canada. I address my remarks particularly to honorable members opposite, who

have been very persistent in their arguments in favour of high protective duty. I think they will find it difficult to show that the worker engaged in the industry has had anything like—

Mr. CHARLTON.—Would it not be as well to address your remarks to the whole Committee, and not to a particular section?

Mr. GREGORY.—I refer particularly to the Deputy Leader of the Labour party (Mr. Charlton).

Mr. CHARLTON.—If the Deputy Leader of the Labour party follows your example, and refers to your party and its attitude on many questions, you will be in an awkward position.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member has not been at all particular in referring to myself, and has made statements that are quite incorrect. I am prepared to support a Protective policy.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Why not have a "cut" at the high priest of Protection, "Bobby Best"?

Mr. GREGORY.—I propose to do so; but the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has very pointedly remarked that I am here as a Free Trader, and, of course, against Protection. This is unjust and unfair. Where it is shown by statistics that an industry is languishing, and there is a desire for higher duties, I am prepared to grant them. But has it been shown in this instance, that the industry needs more protection? The Victorian State Government appointed a Fair Profits Commission to inquire as to the profits of manufacturers in this State, and that Commission, in its Report No. 13, issued last year, says—

There is one other mill, and perhaps two, in which the profits have been increased by too high a rate of gross profit on turnover. The other mills, forming a majority, have been making no more than fair profits. Of the two mills just named as making undue profits, one is a "private" business, i.e., not a public company, but its figures for the past three years are as notable as those of the second mill, which is a public company, and so can be freely named, as the Ballarat Woollen and Worsted Company Limited. Some further reference to this company must be made. It has had many vicissitudes in past years, but of recent years has been very prosperous. After making all allowances for writing off capital in former years, it cannot be said—and the Commission adopts the company's own figures—that shareholders have put more than £60,000 original capital into the business. In

addition, within the last few years £30,000 of reserves have been capitalized and issued in shares to the shareholders. According to published statements, at an interim meeting of the company, held a few weeks ago, the following distribution of profits for the half-year was made, partly out of accumulated but previously undistributed profits, namely:—

Dividend distributed (half-year), £27,000.

Issue of shares as a result of writing-up, plant, &c.—face value, £30,000; market value, about £90,000.

Apart from the shares, the dividend is at the rate of—

45 per cent. per annum on the total nominal capital of £120,000;

90 per cent. per annum on capital subscribed by shareholders;

About 90 per cent. per annum on the capital used in the business as shown by the last annual balance-sheet.

Mr. JACKSON.—What year is referred to in that report?

Mr. GREGORY.—The report was issued last year.

Mr. RILEY.—The manufacturers bled the public during the war.

Mr. GREGORY.—There was no justification whatever for these manufacturers putting up prices as they did. During the general debate on the Tariff, I read a letter sent from the Chamber of Manufacturers in Sydney in regard to blankets, pointing out that the Australian manufacturers could not supply all the blankets required for the people. Letters have also been appearing in the press recently on this subject. One was published in the *Argus* only a few days ago, from a draper, who stated that he could not get supplies of the cheaper flannels required for the poorer sections of the community.

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—That, I think, was largely owing to the strike.

Mr. GREGORY.—It must not be forgotten that during the war our woollen manufacturers got all their wool at the appraised prices. They were not called upon to pay the high rates demanded of the English manufacturers for the same types of wool, but, nevertheless, they raised the prices of their goods enormously, especially for the articles manufactured from the poorer types of wool. The Minister has given us an undertaking that when the Tariff Bill comes down he will make an effort to insert some provision for the protection of the people in regard to items in respect of which high duties have been imposed under this Tariff.

Mr. GABB.—Will you help to do that?

Mr. GREGORY.—I am going to make a suggestion. I understand that the Denton Hat Mills and most manufacturers at present will only supply wholesale houses; and I suggest that if we impose duties, with the idea of making this country self-supporting, we should see to it that the people are able to get their requirements at fair and reasonable prices. I believe the Minister intends to include provision in the Tariff Bill to the effect that where protection is afforded an industry, those who control it shall be compelled to supply goods, say, for cash, to retail houses.

Mr. MATHEWS.—He should do so, at any rate.

Mr. HILL.—Will you support us?

Mr. MATHEWS.—Yes. We will also allow you the honour of bringing in the provision, if you like.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Watkins).—I think the honorable member for Dampier will realize that he is discussing another Bill, not the item before the Committee.

Mr. GREGORY.—I am referring to certain remarks made by the Minister upon this particular matter. I think I would be justified in moving to insert some such provision here.

Mr. GREENE.—Not in the item. If the honorable member tried to do that, he would defeat the end he has in view, because, as he knows, any such amendment would be unconstitutional.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Minister knows why I want to bring this matter forward. I have some remarkable information concerning the position of the woollen industry in Canada, showing how the manufacturers there fleeced the people during the war. They paid poor rates of wages to the workers, and made enormous profits. We know, also, that during the war there was, in this country, one section of the people always ready to give everything. They were to be seen on the wharfs and in the hospitals, men and women, devoting their daily lives to the task of helping the Empire in the struggle. And there was another crowd, generally to be seen chasing around in motor cars, waving flags, and always talking about the Empire, but who, at

the same time, were robbing the people for all they were worth.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—And when we tried to stop them, you gave us no support.

Mr. GREGORY.—I think we all indorse the remark by President Harding, that special legislation should be brought in to provide that, during war time, every person should have his allotted duty, and that no one should be allowed to make undue profits. I have no time for the man who wants high protective duties, but is not prepared to do a fair thing by the community. And yet we have evidence of this on every hand. There is the statement, in the *Industrial Australian*, to the effect that, although the capital invested in the woollen industry in Australia was only about £1,100,000, in three years the manufacturers made profits amounting to more than the whole of the amount invested.

Mr. CHARLTON.—More than that. And yet the honorable member did not say anything about it at the time.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Charlton) is not fair to me, because I would have been only too pleased if legislation had been brought in to deal with these people who, during war time, were out to make excessive profits.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—But what about the war-time profits tax?

Mr. GREGORY.—That did not prove very effective.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—I think it did.

Mr. GABB.—The honorable member for Dampier was called the bridge-builder for the Government during the war.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—Yes. He did not hear the division bells.

Mr. GREGORY.—I think if the honorable member for Keeyong (Sir Robert Best) looks up the Treasurer's statement, he will see how much was received under the war-time profits tax. I thought we would have got £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 at least. I object to these high duties unless we get some definite promise from the Minister that, at an early date, we shall have legislation to compel those who enjoy high Protection to supply their goods at a fair rate to the people.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [3.24].—It is quite refreshing to-day to hear the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) talk about the advisableness of dealing with the people who make excessive profits. His remarks are in marked contrast to what we have been accustomed to in this House during the past few years. I agree with him. So far as woollen goods are concerned, I admit freely that during the war, and at the present time, too, the prices charged to the general public are altogether too high. I also remind the honorable member that the people who support him—the importers of goods manufactured in other countries—also charged excessive prices during the war period.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—That does not alter the position.

Mr. CHARLTON. — Apparently, nothing alters the position in the opinion of the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster). He knows that during the war the wool produced in Australia was exported overseas, manufactured there, and when returned to Australia was sold at prices far in excess of its true value. I am not justifying high prices at all. I merely want to remind the honorable member for Dampier of the true position; and I ask him if he has forgotten the very many occasions when this matter was brought up by honorable members on this side of the House during the war, and if he did anything to help us? The Government then had full power, under the War Precautions Act regulations, to do whatever they liked to stop profiteering. When we impaled the Government on this issue, what did the honorable member do? Why, he supported those who were plundering the people. Let him not forget that. He has little cause to talk at us, and to question my consistency in regard to this matter. My conduct in regard to this matter during the war was quite consistent right through. I always complained that the Government were permitting the manufacturers in this country to rob the people. The honorable member now expresses surprise that more revenue was not received through the medium of the war-time profits tax. But, after all, that was only another device to permit those who were inclined to

increase their prices to extract from the people more than they were entitled to get. They felt secure so long as the Government were able to collect something in the form of excess profits tax. That was the kind of legislation which the honorable member supported, notwithstanding that honorable members on this side of the House frequently pointed to the serious position into which the country was drifting.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—What did you propose to do?

Mr. CHARLTON.—We proposed that the Government should take action, under the War Precautions Act regulations, to prevent profiteering; but the honorable gentleman, on every occasion when there was any possibility of the Government being defeated, was either not in the division, or else some reason was given why he could not support us. It is, as I say, refreshing now to hear the honorable member for Dampier talk in this way.

Mr. CORSER.—What item are we on?

Mr. CHARLTON.—We are on woollen goods, and I am replying to some statements made by the honorable member for Dampier. However, if the honorable member for Wide Bay (Mr. Corser) wants to bring me back to the point, I may state that last year we imported woollen goods to the value of £3,500,000, as compared with £2,000,000 worth made up in Australia. It appears, therefore, that there is room for improvement, so far as our own manufacturing industry is concerned. It is essential that we should be a self-contained nation. Honorable members opposite are in agreement on this question.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It is fair that the consumer should be considered, also.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Exactly. That is what I have been endeavouring to emphasize all the time. I said last evening and I repeat, that the Minister has promised to appoint a Board to see that justice is done to the consumer as well as the manufacturer and the employee. This policy is on the lines of our party platform. This New Protection is what we have been advocating for years. And this is what we asked of the Government during the war. It is pleasing, even at this late hour, to know that at last something is about to be done. I give the

Minister full credit. But we would not be justified in increasing duties solely for the benefit of manufacturers. We must see to it that while they get a fair return on their capital, the workers engaged in the industry and the consumers are treated fairly. We want to be a self-contained nation. The war has taught us this lesson. I object to the honorable member for Dampier charging me with inconsistency, because if any party has been consistent in regard to profiteering it is the party to which I belong. Had we the power when we were in office we would have made an alteration. The power was available during the war to the Government of which the honorable member for Dampier is a supporter; and, had the honorable member and his party been consistent, action would have been taken against those who were then robbing the people.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [3.30].—It is only fair to the Government that I should point out to the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton), from whom we have just heard a very interesting speech, that he was in this House for a considerable time supporting a Government which passed the War Precautions Act and enjoyed all the powers bestowed by that measure. But what action did he and his party take under that Act along the lines that he is now telling us this Government ought to have followed? We have only to turn up the public records to ascertain that the only party which exercised the powers to which the honorable member has referred was the party now in office. But, after all is said and done, this has nothing whatever to do with the case. The woollen mills of Australia before the war were not able to earn more than a reasonable return on their capital.

Mr. JACKSON.—They did not average 5 per cent.

Mr. GREENE.—The average return on capital invested in those mills prior to the war was never high, and in some cases was very low. Undoubtedly we have the raw material in our own country, and the manufacture of it into woollen goods should be one of our great native industries. I think it will be. I know of nothing more hopeful than the development

I have seen in the woollen industry during the last few years; and, if the duties set out in the schedule are agreed to, I have information which leads me to believe that one or two of the great firms which have used our wool at the other end of the world are coming here to commence operations on a big scale. In fact, I believe we are on the threshold of one of the greatest industrial developments we have seen in this country in regard to this particular form of manufacture, in which I believe we ought to be able to hold our own with the world. I am hopeful that the duties provided will be sufficient to encourage these people to come here, and to give those who are already here that protection which is necessary to put the industry on a thoroughly firm and established basis. If honorable members agree to the item, they will have no cause for regret.

Mr. PROWSE (Swan) [3.35].—The manufacture of wool is undoubtedly a natural secondary industry of Australia, and ought to be most successful, seeing that we grow 62 per cent. of the world's merino wool; but I think the Minister (Mr. Greene), in view of his experience under the operations of the War Precautions Act, must realize that he is overdoing things when he seeks to impose a protective duty of 30 to 45 per cent. It is likely to bring great profits to those who actually manufacture the wool, and those who invest their money in woollen mills. The extra impost will be absorbed by higher profits and the payment of higher wages for shorter hours of labour. In view of the experience gained by the Government during the war, they must know what profit it is possible to make in this industry. They took over twenty-two mills with a capital value of £1,144,000, and in two years and four months made a profit of £1,177,000 on the output of those establishments. That is to say, they could have paid off the whole of the capital cost of the mills and still made a substantial profit. I do not think that the making of inordinate profits is calculated to develop the woollen industry. When such profits are made, the people of Australia cannot be getting the advantage they should derive. I am not

opposed to giving reasonable protection to any industry where it can be shown that it is necessary, but in the face of the figures I have quoted the protection asked for on this item is totally unnecessary. In any case, the Australian woollen manufacturer has ample natural protection. He has at his command the raw material, and it is the best in the world; he has every facility for turning it into cloth—the coal, an ample water supply, and an excellent climate—and he has also the protection of freightage. With all these advantages, the Australian manufacturers ought to be in a position to manufacture every bale of wool that Australia produces, and spurn all opposition. No claim can be advanced upon this item for the imposition of high duties on the ground that it is necessary to fence off the competition of black labour, yet we are asked to impose a 30 per cent. duty against the white labour of Great Britain, where wages have risen, and where the cost of coal and other materials has mounted to a high figure. It seems to me quite unnecessary to have this increased protection for the local manufacturer. I would not mind if the duty were made 100 per cent. against outside nations, but as a matter of principle I am not anxious to see unnecessarily high duties imposed, which have a tendency to make Australians inefficient and lazy in the building up of their industries.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [3.39].—I am no friend of, nor do I hold a brief for, the “boss” manufacturer. He is usually a nasty man, who does not pay decent wages unless he is compelled to do so. Workers in woollen mills are among the worst paid in our community. It is true that great profits were made during the war, but we would have been compelled to pay double the prices we did pay for our goods if it had not been for the existence of our own woollen mills. The trouble in regard to the prices we paid during the war arose from the fact that our warehouses in Flinders-lane were not only sellers of goods manufactured locally, but also sellers of imported goods. The great mistake made by the local manufacturers was in allowing a yard of their output to be sold in Flinders-lane. During the war,

a tailor who bought so many pounds worth of goods per month from a certain warehouse was not permitted to take more than a small percentage of Australian-made goods. The serge of the suit I am wearing was obtained by the warehouse from the woollen mills at 11s. 6d. per yard, but when it came to be sold to the tailor the firm demanded 27s. 6d. per yard. Flinders-lane also endeavoured to pass off locally-manufactured goods for imported goods, and at high prices. Though I hold no brief for the manufacturer, I am greatly concerned as to the interests of the workers. For that reason I would like to see higher duties imposed. Once the importer realizes that he is about to be beaten for the local market, he will lower his prices and take less profits in order to overcome the competition of the local manufacturer. We must be prepared for that emergency. During the present year, thirty companies have been formed for the purpose of undertaking the manufacture of woollen goods, and I understand that a dozen more are in course of formation. This is no proof that the duty is sufficient. The companies are hopeful of getting further help from this Parliament. If the wool-growers had gone in for the manufacture of their own wool, there would not have been the great drop they have recently experienced in the price of their crossbred wools. Those wools could easily have been made up into goods and exported. But the pastoralists have never recognised the side on which their bread is buttered. Honorable members ask what steps can be taken to prevent the manufacturers from raising their prices. I hope that the promise of the Minister (Mr. Greene) to introduce legislation to prevent these men from robbing the consumers will be carried into effect; in any case, if the local manufacturers do attempt to rob us by putting up their prices, the importing friends of some honorable members will be more likely to rob us in the same way.

Mr. FLEMING.—Does the honorable member think that the Australian manufacturers are turning out as good a cloth as they should, considering the quality of the wool they are getting?

Mr. MATHEWS.—No place in the world can turn out woollen goods equal

to those produced in the West of England.

Mr. JOWETT.—We produce very good cloth in Australia.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Yes; since the duties were increased in 1908, the quality of the woollen goods produced in Australia has improved enormously, and there is no valid reason why it should not approximate that of the West of England cloth, which, I repeat, is the best turned out in any part of the world. If I had the power, I would make everybody wear 'Australian-manufactured' goods. With this end in view, I would absolutely prohibit the importation of tweeds from the west of England.

Mr. GREGORY.—If we destroy competition we shall increase the cost of commodities.

Mr. MATHEWS.—We can be assured of internal competition if we enact laws to prevent the establishment of combines and the making of extraordinary profits.

Mr. FLEMING.—How long would the quality of goods be maintained under such conditions?

Mr. MATHEWS.—If there were no combines in Australia the different woollen mills would certainly maintain the quality of their goods. Take a list of the manufacturers in the Commonwealth to-day. They are all deeply concerned in each other's welfare, but legislation could prevent them from arriving at any so-called "honorable understanding." That would be the common-sense way of checking this evil. What is the position in which we find ourselves? Australia is the greatest wool producer in the world, and yet there is wool selling here to-day at 2d. per lb. Why should we not encourage the conversion of that wool into the cheaper forms of cloth? During the war the duty imposed upon woollen goods was utterly useless, because we could not have obtained those goods from overseas at any price.

Mr. JOWETT.—The honorable member means that the duty was inoperative?

Mr. MATHEWS.—Yes; tailors were buying goods from the warehouses in Melbourne from 42s. to 25s. per yard, whilst others were indenting woollen goods at those prices. Yet in the years gone by I have made up thousands of yards of the same material at 8s. and 9s.

per yard. To-day, however, everybody is endeavouring to restore the pre-war conditions. We all recognise that wages must come down in England and America, because manufacturers there desire to produce cheaper commodities for the purpose of supplying the oversea markets. We must take steps to prevent this dumping in Australia.

Mr. GREGORY.—Has the honorable member any idea of how the wages in the Old Country compare with the wages paid in Australia?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I cannot say. The woollen manufacturers are no friends of mine, because they do not pay adequate wages to their workmen.

Mr. JOWETT.—At the present time the wages paid in the Old Country are higher than those which are being paid here.

Mr. MATHEWS.—There is only one way in which we can get better wages and better industrial conditions for the employees of our woollen manufacturers, namely, by Protection through the Customs House. We all know that at the end of the season countries which produce certain commodities export their surplus to foreign markets. A case of the kind was quoted in this chamber to-day. At the present time the users of fat in Australia are paying £8 per ton more for that article than is being paid for it in England. We now have an opportunity to set our house in order. The Tariff is before us, and until that great bone of contention, William Morris Hughes, returns to upset us again, we have time to consider it from a scientific stand-point. It is up to us to see that this great wool-producing country shall also become a manufacturer of woollen-piece goods. I appeal to the Minister, in spite of the uproar that has been caused by this item, to increase the duty which has been proposed upon it.

Mr. RILEY. — Put more than 45 per cent. upon it?

Mr. MATHEWS.—Yes. If I could compel our manufacturers to keep their prices down to a reasonable level I would impose a duty of 100 per cent. upon it. There is no reason why we should not compel our manufacturers to sell their products at a fair price. Could we not create a Department which would take into consideration the cost of labour and

the cost of manufacturing operations, and which would assess the profits that ought to be made upon the capital invested?

Mr. GREGORY.—If we only allowed a certain interest we should destroy the desire of the people to undertake the work.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That is a conservative view which ought long since to have been forgotten. Some years ago the manufacturers of Melbourne Ports held a conference which I attended, at which they considered the freight which the coastal shipping companies should charge them, and also the price which should be paid for coal used in their industrial establishments. I was told that these prices were too high. My reply was, "Very well. We want to stop that. The Labour party desires that the Commonwealth shall have power to compel the companies to charge only a fair price for their coal. Will you vote for us?" Their answer was, "Oh no, Mathews. The worst of your crowd is that they go too far." These people feared that if we regulated the prices charged by the shipping companies we should also regulate the prices which they themselves charged. In spite of the capitalistic talk to the effect that labour is ruining Australia, quite a number of persons are anxious to embark upon this particular industry. I have no use for our present economic system, but I recognise that the people who sent me here have to live whilst we are effecting a change in it. I wish to give them an opportunity to live during the transition period, and the only way in which I can do that is by granting Protection to our manufacturers. I ask the Minister if he cannot see his way clear to increase the duty upon this item?

Progress reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

Lieut.-Colonel Walker's Sworn Statement.

Motion (by Mr. GREENE) proposed—

That the House do now adjourn.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [3.55].—I regret having to bring under the notice of honorable members a letter which I

have received from my solicitor, in reply to a communication from Messrs. Ellison and Hewison, another firm of solicitors, which was read in this Chamber by the honorable member for Herbert (Mr. Bamford). During the interval which has passed I asked my solicitor to give me his opinion upon that letter. I have no animus against the author of it, but, as he has taken up quite an unwarranted attitude upon behalf of his client, I propose to read the reply to it, which I have received from my solicitor, Mr. Joseph Woolf. It is as follows:—

Melbourne, 13th May, 1921.

DEAR DR. MALONEY,

Your letter of the 6th of May duly to hand. It is curious that Messrs. Ellison and Hewison persistently ignore the real facts of your speech as set out in *Hansard*.

They could not fail to see that the real and essential fact you set out is actually true, namely, that Colonel Walker, as may be seen at page 311 of the evidence following his previous statement on oath, then formally recanted and withdrew his sworn statement on oath. This statement was he deliberately swore that he had seen Mr. Caldwell in the presence of himself and others sign the document produced.

He said he was aware of his responsibility and the nature of an oath when he made this statement. He had previously challenged the Committee to call a writing expert who would verify the signature as Caldwell's signature.

Your inference, therefore, is irresistible, namely, that he produced a forged document. You, however, omitted the word "therefore." If you had said, "Since Colonel Walker relied for his perjured statement on the document he produced, it must have been such a perfect signature of Caldwell's as to deceive a writing expert." You would have stated a conclusion had you used the word "therefore." Colonel Walker evidently believed that he could commit perjury without being found out, as he impudently challenged the Committee to produce a writing expert, because he believed the signature was such a good imitation of Caldwell's that he would be borne out. If a signature will deceive a writing expert it must be a remarkably good forgery of the original signature. Of course, you could not prove that it was forged by Walker or anybody else, but Walker gambled on the perfection of the forgery. You obviously knew nothing about it. Most men would agree with you had you stated this as a conclusion, but you stated it as a fact, and did not preface it with the word "therefore." You would not be able to prove as a fact in a Court of law that this signature of Caldwell's was in fact a forgery, and, therefore, that it would be a forged document. This, however, does not dispose with the real question. Colonel Walker has the unparalleled audacity to try and

make you responsible on a completely false issue. He is like a cuttlefish which flings out inky fluid to prevent being followed. These cuttlefish tactics of Walker are obviously designed to save him from further prosecution for perjury. Now he turns round and says, "Although I committed perjury deliberately and in order to prove I was telling the truth, demanded a writing expert to prove it was a real signature, I now turn round and say since I committed perjury when I said it was written by Caldwell it is no longer a forged signature, and I no longer want a writing expert, and, therefore, Mr. Maloney would have independently to prove that it was a forged signature, but he cannot do this, as he is unaware of any of the circumstances.

Here, an impudent offender against the criminal law instead of being repentant and humble, actually dares to threaten a member of Parliament, who honorably does his duty, which this unrepentant sinner by threatening hopes to deter him from doing. The crime is defined in the Act of Parliament which constitutes the Joint Accounts Committee, and the punishment for this crime of perjury is five years' imprisonment. Their duty was clearly to uphold the law of the Commonwealth. Of course, it is ridiculous to assume that a man who deliberately sets out to commit perjury does not commit it, because he is found out and forced to recant. You cannot be deterred from doing your duty by any threat or impudent challenge to surrender your parliamentary privilege. The parliamentary privilege is the highest privilege a member of Parliament has, and that is a very good illustration of its value to the community. Here the facts are absolutely true as a whole, and you have acted as an honorable man in making your statement for the benefit of Parliament and for the protection of public morality, which ought to include that no man who commits perjury, no matter how highly placed, should escape justice. The question is, what does the honour of Parliament demand if the Joint Accounts Committee have failed to observe those principles of honour which should actuate all members of Parliament for the enforcement of the law.

Sir Frank Madden, when challenged on one occasion to repeat outside statements that he had made in Parliament, refused to do so, and I shall follow his example in this case, but if a statement is wanted as to perjury, I am ready to make it. I do not know Mr. Hewison, but Mr. Ellison I have found a decent fellow. I take it that in this case he speaks as a lawyer representing a client, and wishes to make a point, because I did not use the word "therefore." I am fighting for an Australian native who has been deeply wronged. Had not Colonel Walker's statement, made in the course of evidence on oath, been challenged by the cross-examination of Senator J. D. Millen, so that Colonel Walker was forced to own

Dr. Maloney.

that what he had sworn to was not true, much injury would have been done to this man. Thirty years ago, in this chamber, I tried to secure the punishment of a millionaire who had committed perjury, as later I tried to secure redress for the Reverend J. B. Ronald, who was injured by nine witnesses who gave perjured evidence against him. Apparently, however, under our laws, if a man has money enough, he may escape punishment for an offence for which, if poor, he would be put into gaol.

Mr. BAMFORD (Herbert) [4.2].—I could not clearly follow the letter which the honorable member for Melbourne (Dr. Maloney) has just read; but it seemed to be a climb down on the part of Mr. Woolf. If it is contended that Colonel Walker has committed perjury, why has not an information been sworn against him in the Courts?

Dr. MALONEY.—That will come.

Mr. BAMFORD.—The honorable member has taken advantage of the privilege of free speech which Parliament confers on a member, but I say, advisedly, that no man under cover of that privilege should stab another in the back, giving him no opportunity to reply. All that is asked is that the statements made in Mr. Woolf's letter, which have been voiced by the honorable member, shall be repeated outside.

Dr. MALONEY.—They are in the office of the Attorney-General.

Mr. BAMFORD.—This is a fair challenge, and we have made it before. Let these statements be uttered outside, so that Colonel Walker may take action in respect to them, and clear his character definitely, or, if he cannot do so, accept the consequences. This is not an unreasonable thing to ask. No man should make statements in this House which may damage a citizen for the rest of his life, and not give that citizen an opportunity to make an adequate reply.

Dr. MALONEY.—Colonel Walker tried to injure a real Australian.

Mr. BAMFORD.—The honorable member is protecting a man who endeavoured, to use an Americanism, to sell the Commonwealth a gold brick.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 4.4. p.m.

House of Representatives.

Wednesday, 25 May, 1921.

The Clerk announced the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, and also that of Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING SPEAKER.

Sir JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Acting Prime Minister and Treasurer) [3.1].—I am sure that we all deeply regret the cause of the absence of Mr. Deputy Speaker, who is suffering a bereavement which will probably keep him from the House for the rest of the week. Mr. Speaker himself, I understand, is not yet well enough to attend, and in all probability will not be here for some little time yet. In these unfortunate circumstances I move—

That the Honorable Frederick William Bamford do take the Chair of the House to act as Speaker for this day, and for each day on which Mr. Deputy Speaker is absent.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [3.2].—I have much pleasure in proposing that Mr. Charlton, the honorable member for Hunter, do take the Chair until the return of Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I decline the nomination, preferring to see Mr. Bamford in the Chair.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I understood that that was the position.

Question received in the affirmative.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER took the Chair at 3.3 p.m., and read prayers.

BUILDINGS AT CANBERRA.

Mr. BLAKELEY.—I ask the Minister representing the Minister for Home and Territories whether he has received the plans and specifications of the Convention Hall and Hostel at Canberra; and, if so, has he any statement to make to the House about it?

Mr. GROOM.—The Advisory Committee has presented a report, together with sketch, plans, and designs. These will be submitted to Cabinet at its next meeting.

Mr. RILEY.—When will that be?

Mr. GROOM.—This week, I hope.

NEW GUINEA COMMISSION.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Has the attention of the Acting Prime Minister been drawn to a letter in this morning's Melbourne newspapers, signed "C. R. Rolleston, Lieutenant-Commander, R.N., retired," in which the writer states that he wrote to the right honorable gentleman regarding the Commission that is lost, stolen, or strayed in what was German New Guinea, and received an acknowledgment of his letter? Does the Acting Prime Minister intend to allow Lieutenant-Commander Rolleston to interview him, or has he anything to say to the House about the Commission?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I received a communication from Lieutenant-Commander Rolleston, which had, I think, to do with the causes of his resignation from the Commission. I have sent two radios to the Administrator of New Guinea, but have had no reply yet.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Then they must be lost.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—If the Commission is doing its work, it is lost for the time being. In the interior of New Guinea there are not the up-to-date appliances for communication that we enjoy in these more favoured regions.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—The Commission has a wireless plant with it.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—That may be so, but I have not been able to get into touch with the members of the Commission.

LOAN TO QUEENSLAND.

RELIEF OF UNEMPLOYMENT: DEVELOPMENT OF BURNETT LANDS.

Mr. HIGGS.—I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether, with a view to relieving the distress caused by unemployment in Queensland, where there are 5,000 men out of work, he will advance to that State, by way of loan, a portion of the £2,000,000 to be expended by the State Government upon the construction of a railway through the Upper Burnett, Callide Valley, and Prairie Lands, Mr. H. S. Gullett having reported that it is estimated that three years will be occupied in the construction of this railway. Will the right honorable gentleman, advance, say, £250,000 forthwith, and the balance of

the £2,000,000 in instalments of £250,000 every four months?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Much as I should like to help the unemployed, who I know to be numerous throughout the Commonwealth, as well as in Queensland, I cannot advance money for the purpose desired. Many objects are very desirable in themselves, and among them the proposals which Mr. Gullett has recommended. No one questions the merits of these proposals; but, notwithstanding that admission, it is impossible for me to make loan funds available for the railway referred to, and I much regret to have to say "No" to this request. The other day I had a telegram from Mr. Stopford, the representative of Mount Morgan in the Queensland Legislative Assembly, who asked me if I would contribute pound for pound in connexion with the offer of the Queensland Ministry of £1,000 per week in reduced railway freights for the assistance of the miners, but it must be clear to any one who considers the matter calmly that it is the function of the State Government to deal with these matters. I have no money to spare for that purpose. I very much regret to have to refuse these requests, and I hope that something may turn up soon to set these industrial enterprises going again.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—The honorable member is like Mr. Micawber.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—My suggestion is that those concerned with these industries should be allowed to settle their differences round a table. I believe that if they were permitted to do that, the miners of Mount Morgan and of other places would soon be at work again.

FELLMONGERING INDUSTRY.

Mr. JOWETT.—I ask the Minister for Trade and Customs whether he has yet received a report of the proceedings of the conference at which I introduced a deputation of fellmongers to Sir John Higgins last week for the purpose of discussing with him the question of the release of fellmongered skin wools from the restrictions imposed upon the sale and export of wool as the result of the resolution which was adopted by this Parliament about three weeks ago. I also ask whether he has received any

advice of the result of the meeting yesterday of the Federated Fellmongers of Australia when that body passed a strong resolution requesting that fellmongered skin wool should be freed from those restrictions. Further, is he aware of the very serious state of the fellmongering industry in Australia at the present moment, and of the fact that no less than four fellmongers' establishments have closed, and have announced their intention not to re-open until the industry has been freed from these restrictions?

Mr. GREENE.—I have not received the information of which the honorable member speaks. As he is aware, the fellmongers saw me in conjunction with the Acting Prime Minister a little while ago. As the result of that interview a further interview was arranged with Sir John Higgins, at which one of my officers attended. He reported to me that the fellmongers were fully satisfied with the results attained at the conference, and were prepared to continue operations.

Mr. JOWETT.—They held a meeting yesterday at which they said they were not satisfied.

Mr. GREENE.—I have mentioned the last official intimation which reached me. If any new development has arisen, I shall be glad to look into it. The sole desire of the Government is to carry out the scheme decided upon by Parliament in a manner that will benefit the industry without placing any undue obstacle in the way of any branch of it.

PRICE OF BUTTER.

Mr. BLAKELEY.—I ask the Minister for Trade and Customs whether it is a fact that Australian butter is being sold in London for 190s. per cwt., whilst the same quality of butter is being sold in New South Wales for 196s. per cwt., and in Victoria for 205s. 4d. per cwt., and, if so, will he take the necessary steps to insure that the people of this country shall be able to purchase Australian butter at the same price as that at which it can be purchased in London?

Mr. GREENE.—The only Australian butter upon the London market at the present time of which I have any knowledge is butter which was sent home as the result of the Imperial contract for

the purchase of that commodity. The British Government paid 274s. per cwt. for that butter, and, of course, we have no control over the price at which they shall sell it. If they feel obliged to sell it at a lower price than that at which they purchased it, the matter is one over which we have no control whatever.

SPEECH BY PRIME MINISTER.

Mr. McGRATH.—I ask the Treasurer whether it is a fact that 3,000 words of a speech delivered by the Prime Minister in this Chamber were cabled to England at the cost of the Commonwealth, and whether, later on, 4,000 words of that speech were cabled from Colombo at the cost of the Commonwealth. I also desire to know whether it is true that the Commonwealth is paying for advertising the right honorable gentleman?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I believe that the statement which has been published in at least one newspaper here, to the effect that 4,000 words of the Prime Minister's speech were cabled from Colombo, is a pure invention. It is not correct at all.

PRIME MINISTER: EXPENSES IN LONDON.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether any sum has been allocated for the expenses of the Prime Minister in London, and, if so, what is the amount?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—No sum of which I am aware has been allocated.

RIOT IN SYDNEY DOMAIN.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I ask the Minister representing the Minister for Defence whether inquiries have been made into the allegations that Defence motor cars were used in the Sydney Domain upon the 6th inst. in connexion with a riot which took place there, and that liquor was distributed from these motor cars amongst certain disturbers?

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—The statements in question, so far as I am informed, are absolutely incorrect. There were no Defence motor cars used upon that occasion. As a matter of fact there

was only one Defence motor ambulance out of the garage upon that day.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The fact that the Defence ambulance was there shows that the riot was engineered by the military.

UPPER BURNETT, CALLIDE VALLEY, AND PRAIRIE LANDS.

RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION.

Mr. HIGGS.—I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether, in view of the widespread interest taken in Queensland in the proposal to open up the Upper Burnett, Callide Valley, and Prairie Lands, the Minister will have printed Mr. H. S. Gullett's report on the proposal that the Commonwealth Government should lend to the State of Queensland the sum of £2,000,000 for railway construction?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I thought that there was a Printing Committee here to supervise these things. Personally, I have no objection to Mr. Gullett's report being printed.

Mr. HIGGS.—Will the honorable gentleman move that it be printed?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I will. At the same time I understood that these matters were dealt with by the Printing Committee. No doubt there is very much interest exhibited in Queensland in Mr. Gullett's report, and as there are demands for it, I move—

That the report be printed.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Surely to goodness this matter will be referred to the Printing Committee before the motion is carried. If it be not, and the members of the Printing Committee are worth their salt, they will resign, because, by the adoption of the motion, we shall have taken their functions out of their hands.

Mr. BLAKELEY.—What nonsense!

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I have no objection to the paper being printed, but seeing that we have appointed a Committee to deal specifically with the question of the printing of papers, the matter should surely be referred to it.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. F. W. Bamford).—I would point out to the honorable member that it is a common practice here for a Minister to move that

a paper be printed. Whenever that course is adopted the matter is entirely taken out of the hands of the Printing Committee.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

FEDERAL CAPITAL.

ERECTION OF BUILDINGS.

Mr. BLAKELEY.—I ask the Minister for Works and Railways whether it is a fact that up to the present no cottages have been completed at Canberra, and that very few have actually been started. Further, will he take the necessary steps to see that the erection of these cottages and the carrying out of other works is expedited by getting the necessary labour at the Capital site?

Mr. GROOM.—The position is that I did not receive a report from Canberra last week, but three cottages near the power-house were almost completed several days ago. Altogether in that area ten cottages have been authorized. Progress is taking place rapidly with regard to the other twenty.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Authorized by whom?

Mr. GROOM.—Authorized under an appropriation by Parliament, and by Ministerial authority.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Were they recommended by the Public Works Committee?

Mr. GROOM.—No. The sum involved in their erection is less than £25,000.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—So that is the game, is it?

Mr. GROOM.—The honorable member knows what is the practice of Parliament. In addition, authority has been given for the erection of seven cottages for the men who are employed at the brick works. But the progress now taking place with respect to the erection of these buildings is as rapid as possible.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Is it the intention of the Government to proceed with the erection of houses and other buildings at the Capital site without submitting those works to the Public Works Committee?

Mr. GROOM.—The Act specifically lays it down that any works involving an expenditure of £25,000 and upwards must be referred to the Public Works Committee.

Mr. MATHEWS.—But are you going to keep these matters down to less than £25,000?

Mr. GROOM.—The practice as set forth in the Act will be followed in connexion with all works at the Federal Capital.

Mr. MATHEWS.—You will be defeating your own object if you try to do things in this way.

WAR GRATUITIES.

Mr. McGRATH.—With respect to the cashing of soldiers' war gratuities, is the Acting Prime Minister now in a position to make his promised statement?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I shall do so to-morrow. I expect to complete matters with that object to-day.

BASIC WAGE AND CHILD ALLOWANCE.

Mr. BLUNDELL.—In connexion with the regulations having to do with the basic wage and the payment of the child allowance, I wish to know whether widows employed in the Commonwealth Service have been specially excluded from the benefits of the payment of the child allowance.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I am not aware whether that is so or not, but will make inquiries if the honorable member will put his question on the business-paper.

WOOL EXPORT AND LOCAL SALES.

Mr. GREGORY.—In connexion with the comparative restrictions placed on the export of wool from Australia at present, is it not a fact that absolute freedom is given for the sale of wool within Australia, providing that such wool is not intended for export?

Mr. GREENE.—There are no restrictions of any kind in regard to the sale of wool within Australia. That is to say, any wool can be bought or sold. However, if the buyer wants to export it he must show that he has paid the Bawra reserve price for it, or he will be required to enter into an undertaking, if the person concerned is sending it for consignment abroad, that he will not sell it abroad below the Bawra prices. Beyond those points there are, I repeat, no restrictions.

FEDERAL CAPITAL BOARD.

Mr. J. H. CATTS asked the Minister for Works and Railways, *upon notice*—

1. In regard to the undertaking of the Minister made to the Leader of the Opposition last November (*Hansard*, page 7029) to announce the conditions and terms of agreement under which the Federal Capital Board was to work, so that honorable members might have an opportunity to consider the matter before finality was reached, has the Minister carried out that undertaking, and, if not, will he now supply the information?

2. Is the Board occupying its time making a detailed investigation as to the strength of a temporary bridge over the Molonglo, erected to carry a maximum weight of 3 tons, on the assumption that it is a permanent structure intended to carry heavy traction engines and unlimited weight?

3. If the Minister is having a report made as to this bridge, will he at the same time consider the report of Mr. Commissioner Blacket on the bridge which preceded it, and which was swept away by flood?

Mr. GROOM.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. On the 9th November, 1920, speaking upon a motion of adjournment moved by the honorable member, I outlined the scope of the Committee's functions. Owing to correspondence with Mr. Griffin as to being a member of the Committee being protracted, I was unable to announce the final arrangements to the House before the session closed. The duties intrusted to the Committee were published in the *Commonwealth Gazette* of the 2nd February, 1921, and copied by the daily newspapers.

2. No.

3. See answer to No. 2.

Mr. J. H. CATTS asked the Minister for Works and Railways, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that, notwithstanding Mr. Sulman's statement in "Building" that he refused to accept any fees or honorarium as chairman of the Federal Capital Board, the Government are pressing Mr. Sulman to depart from his intention and accept payment?

2. If so, is this in the interests of economy or is the object to have better control of the Board?

3. Is it now proposed to pay the departmental officers on this Board an amount additional to their departmental salaries; if so, how much?

4. What is the estimated cost of the above-mentioned Board per annum, including fees, travelling expenses, and other expenses incidental to its activities?

Mr. GROOM.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. No.

2. See No. 1.

3. The fees being paid are as indicated in my reply to the honorable member's question on 11th May, 1921. There has not been any proposal put forward to pay the Commonwealth officers who are members of the Committee a special allowance.

4. On the basis of expenditure up to date about £2,500 per annum.

EX-WARRANT OFFICER LITTLE.

Mr. MAKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. Whether the Minister has noted the circumstances of ex-Warrant Officer F. H. Little's discharge from the Australian Imperial Force and the manner in which that discharge is now affecting his claims for gratuity, and how it may further prejudice his future applications for Government appointments?

2. Has the Department conclusive and substantiated proof concerning unworthy conduct of ex-Warrant Officer F. H. Little while on service abroad?

3. If not, will the Department issue a clean discharge to F. H. Little?

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—The answer to the honorable member's questions is as follows:—

1, 2, and 3. Ex-Warrant Officer Little and another soldier were returned from Egypt in June, 1916, under orders of the General Officer Commanding in Egypt, their services being no longer required. Allegations had been made against these men of corrupt practice, and in a preliminary hearing in their presence a native contractor, his manager, and also his cashier made statements that the soldiers had on several occasions demanded and received money from them; the accused men reserved their defence.

As the evidence was verbal and not documentary, it was considered difficult to prove the case, and, consequently, trial by court martial was not ordered, but it was, nevertheless thought inadvisable that the men should be retained in their positions and they were returned to Australia where they were discharged.

As the issue had not been tried and further investigation was then impracticable, these men were given the opportunity of re-enlisting with the rank they held on their return. Warrant Officer Little did not take this opportunity, but the other soldier re-enlisted and gave further service abroad.

Warrant Officer Little, as there had been no conviction, was given a "good" character on his discharge certificate. The reason for discharge given was, "Services no longer required"—this was the only reason provided by the regulations which was applicable, as the period of his enlistment had not terminated, and was also a reason given at the time in respect of honorable discharges where the other reasons provided by the regulations were not applicable.

Payment of war gratuity was made, by direction of the Central War Gratuity Board, for the period 21st October, 1914, to 18th July, 1916, *i.e.*, from date of embarkation to date of discharge. The Board, under section 8 of the War Gratuity Acts 1920, ordered that the balance was to be withheld. An appeal by Little was later considered by the Board and dismissed.

MONT PARK HOSPITAL.

EMPLOYMENT OF RETURNED SOLDIERS.

Mr. McGRATH asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, *upon notice*—

1. Are sixteen returned soldiers who are employed at the Military Hospital, Mont Park, working sixty-two hours per week?

2. Is it a fact, as reported, that they have not received any public holidays, such as Christmas Day and Good Friday, for the last two years?

3. Is it a fact, as reported, that the extra 1s. per day allowed to other members of the military staff has not been paid to the returned soldiers at Mont Park?

4. Will he take the necessary action to have these apparent injustices remedied?

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE. — The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. No. The staff at No. 16 Australian General Hospital are on duty for an average of fifty-four hours per week.

2. In an institution of this kind it is impossible to make special arrangements for a greater proportion of the staff to be given leave on public holidays. The staff at No. 16 Australian General Hospital are granted twenty-one days' annual leave and two days' leave per week. All leave due has been taken.

3. The staff are paid according to rank in accordance with regulations covering pay to members of the home service. Any differentiation in pay is not as between returned soldiers and non-returned soldiers, but as between those performing clerical duty and those employed on attendant duty, the former receiving 6s. per week extra.

4. In view of the answers to questions 1, 2, and 3, no action is proposed.

FEDERAL CAPITAL DESIGN.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (for Dr. MALONEY) asked the Minister for Works and Railways, *upon notice*—

If he will inform the House who were the officers who were concerned in the making of the "Built-up design" or "Departmental Plans" for the Federal Capital?

Mr. GROOM.—Full particulars will be found in Parliamentary Paper No. 65, printed in 1912, copy of which I now lay on the table.

REPATRIATION.

LIVING ALLOWANCES: SETTLEMENT OF SOLDIERS: SCALES OF PENSIONS.

Mr. LAZZARINI asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation, *upon notice*—

With regard to the abolition of living allowances to soldiers' widows and mothers, will he inform the House whether this is done by the Commission for Repatriation acting on its own initiative or on instructions from the Minister?

Mr. RODGERS.—Living allowances to soldiers' widows and mothers have not been abolished.

Dr. EARLE PAGE asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation, *upon notice*—

1. In what number of estates resumed or purchased for settlement of soldiers has re-appraisal of values taken place in (a) New South Wales, (b) Victoria, (c) Queensland, (d) other States?

2. What is the total amount written off in connexion with such re-appraisal?

3. Does the State or the Federal Government bear this apparent loss?

Mr. RODGERS.—The Repatriation Department is not in possession of this information, the purchase and valuation of estates being entirely within the jurisdiction of the State Governments. A request for the desired information has been forwarded to the several States. I may add that any such writing-off would not be a matter for the Commonwealth, but would be an act of whatever State might be concerned, for which procedure that State would have to bear full responsibility.

Mr. FOLEY (for Mr. BURCHELL) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation, *upon notice*—

Whether he will have a return prepared and submitted to Parliament showing full particulars of ex-soldier land settlement in Western

Australia, separate figures to be given for ex-members of the Australian Imperial Force and ex-Imperial soldiers?

Mr. RODGERS.—Returns from the Department of Lands and Survey, Western Australia, show statistics up to 30th April, 1921, as follow:—

	Applica- tions Received	Qualifica- tion Cer- tificates Granted.	Rejected or Deferred.	Pend- ing.	Men Settled.
Ex-members A.I.F.	5,210	5,324	367	528	3,780
Ex-Imperial Soldiers	198	70	6	122	33

Mr. CAMERON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation, *upon notice*—

Will he furnish a statement, for the purpose of comparison, showing the maximum scales of war pensions payable by Australia, Great Britain and other parts of the Empire, as well as by our Allies in the late European war, in respect of—

- (a) disabled soldier; (b) widow of soldier;
(c) widowed mother of deceased soldier; (d) disabled soldier, his wife and three children?

Mr. RODGERS.—I ask the honorable member to defer his question. A statement covering this matter is being prepared, and will be furnished to-morrow.

WHEAT AND FLOUR.

SALES TO SOUTH AFRICA.

Mr. FOLEY (for Mr. BURCHELL) asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Whether he is yet in a position to make his promised statement relative to the sale of "B" grade wheat and flour to South Africa?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The South African Government have intimated that the claims of the purchasers of the alleged inferior wheat and flour are being thoroughly checked on behalf of the Government, and full particulars will be forwarded as early as possible. Until these claims are received and carefully investigated here, I am unable to make a statement in regard to the matter, but honorable members may rest assured that full information on the subject will be made available as soon as possible.

BREAK OF RAILWAY GAUGES.

Mr. GROOM.—On the 19th May the honorable member for Nepean (Mr. Bow-

den) asked me when it was likely that a report would be received from the Uniform Gauge Commission. I have made inquiry, and I am advised that it is at present impossible to give a date upon which the Commissioners' report will be received. I am also informed that the work of the Commission, which was appointed in February, 1921, is progressing rapidly. Much of the information required by the Commissioners has to be obtained from the various States and the Commonwealth railways officers. Whilst some of the information is in the hands of the Commissioners, there is a good deal to be supplied to them before they can complete their report.

COTTON SEED AND RAW COTTON.

Mr. GREENE.—On 5th May the honorable member for Nepean (Mr. Bowden) asked the Minister for Health if arrangements had been made for the fumigation of raw cotton on its importation into this country to prevent the introduction of disease. I replied that I was not aware, but that I would make inquiries and let the honorable member know. I am now in a position to furnish the honorable member with the following information:—All cotton containing seeds is either fumigated or subjected to treatment for the removal of the seeds, which are afterwards destroyed. Cotton which has been partially treated, and from which all seed has been removed, has not hitherto been fumigated, except when examination suggests the advisability for so doing, but consideration is now being given to the practicability of fumigating all imported raw cotton.

PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—
Taxation—Seventh Annual Report of the Commissioner, years 1916-17 to 1919-20.

Ordered to be printed.

Defence Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1921, Nos. 94, 96, 103.

Public Service Act—Promotions of G. W. Bingham and F. G. Hayward, Postmaster-General's Department.

War Service Homes Act—Land acquired under, in New South Wales, at—
Balmain, Goulburn, Kiama, Windsor, Wollongong.

TARIFF.

In Committee of Ways and Means:

Consideration resumed from 20th May (vide page 8604).

Item 105—

		British Preferential Tariff.	Intermediate Tariff.	General Tariff.
(F) Woollen, or containing wool, n.e.i.	ad val.	30 per cent.	40 per cent.	45 per cent.
(a) Hair Cloth and Cloth of Hair and Cotton or Hair and Wool combined for lining apparel	ad val.	Free	5 per cent.	10 per cent.
(W) Waterproofed Cloth, prepared with Rubber, Oil, or Celluloid—				
(1) Woollen or containing wool	ad val.	30 per cent.	40 per cent.	45 per cent.
(2) Silk or containing silk, but not containing wool	ad val.	20 per cent.	25 per cent.	30 per cent.
(3) Leather Cloth	ad val.	5 per cent.	10 per cent.	15 per cent.
(4) N.E.I.	ad val.	15 per cent.	20 per cent.	25 per cent.

Sir ROBERT BEST (Kooyong) [3.35].—I regret that the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) has taken every opportunity to refer to the woollen manufacturers as the shocking example of those who have made exorbitant profits. The honorable member stated that as in some cases the profits made by the woollen manufacturers ranged from 20 per cent. to 45 per cent., and that in one instance it was 90 per cent., he was desirous of having the duty reduced so that manufacturers would be prevented from making undue profits in future. In other words, assuming the figures are correct, the effect would be that those who made small profits were to be punished alike with those who had been more fortunate. If the honorable member will look into the history of the woollen industry in Australia—I speak particularly as regards Victoria—he will see that the early experience of those who embarked in this industry was disastrous. We admired those who endeavoured to establish the industry in Australia with great courage and enterprise under difficult conditions; but it must be remembered that during the first years they suffered heavy financial losses, and, in many cases, capital had to be written down, and companies reconstructed. Even during 1914 the average profit earned did not exceed 2½ per cent.; and if the honorable member for Dampier will take the trouble to average the profits made by these manufacturers from the beginning

to the present time—notwithstanding the very lucrative period of war—he will find that they had made a totally inadequate profit as compared with other manufacturers.

Mr. GREGORY.—That was my complaint; we could not get their earlier reports.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—I admit that early reports were not available; but I can assure the honorable member that, as an ex-Minister for Customs, and one who has had occasion to give some attention to this matter, the experience of the woollen manufacturers during the early stages was surrounded with many difficulties; and why they should be selected for special animadversion it is difficult to say. At most, the charge is that they made certain profits during the war period, but nothing like those made by manufacturers abroad.

Mr. FOLEY.—If undue profits were made abroad, that is no justification for local manufacturers making excessive profits.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Perhaps not; but it is better that our manufacturers should make that profit rather than that the foreign manufacturers who send their goods here. But I beg honorable members to bear in mind that during the war period the woollen manufacturers of Australia were under the rigid control of the Government.

Mr. RILEY.—That does not say much for the Government.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Their factories were practically taken over by the Government, who fixed the price to be paid for the output.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—For a time.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—For the whole period. The Government fixed the price to be paid for the woollens manufactured, and the proprietors of these undertakings were instructed to go ahead with the manufacture of cloth, flannels and blankets, with the result that for a considerable portion of the war period many manufacturers were working three shifts per day, because it was essential that they should put forth their best efforts. When it is said that during a period of three years woollen manufacturers made profits amounting almost to their capital representing upwards of a million of money—honorable members must recall that, for a time, they were working three shifts, and the profit made should really be spread over a normal period of eight or nine years. The price at which they were to be paid for their output was fixed by the Government, and they were therefore, justified in going full speed ahead and making as much as they legitimately could, and is there any one in this House who will say that the manufacturers were responsible or blameworthy?

Mr. RILEY.—For military cloth only.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—They were not allowed to produce anything else.

Mr. RILEY.—They were in the State of New South Wales.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—I do not think so.

Mr. RILEY.—Yes.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Then it must have been very little. When I speak of cloth I include blankets and flannels and everything of the kind required for war purposes. I speak subject to correction, but I believe that the whole of the output of every description was taken by the Government. If some was permitted to go into private channels, the amount was very small indeed. Honorable members should bear in mind that what the manufacturers did was done under rigid Government control, and my honorable friend was, therefore, not justified in the severity of his censure. I remind honorable members again that the local manufacturers' profits were comparatively

small when compared with the profits made by manufacturers abroad whose imports were pouring into Australia.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The Government's orders were a perfect godsend to the local manufacturers.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That is so. They could not have carried on had not the exigencies of war enabled them to benefit by a vast output. They had been struggling in the past, but, the Government fixing prices, they produced to the best of their ability, and, as I have said, they worked their machinery three shifts to meet the demands made upon them.

Mr. HILL.—They had the advantage of being able to secure their wool at a price below the flat rate.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That is so, but I remind the honorable member that the Government, in fixing the price of their goods, had due knowledge of and regard to that fact.

Mr. WIENHOLT.—Their profits were so great in one instance that the Government stepped in and took 80 per cent. of them.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—The honorable member refers to the production of wool tops, but I am speaking now as to the production of cloth. The imports of woollen goods for the year ended 28th February, 1920, were valued at upwards of £2,000,000.

Mr. GIBSON.—Because of the high prices.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That, to some extent, was the reason; but I point out that the imports of woollen goods for the year ended 28th February, 1921, were valued at £6,675,000, or more than three times the value of the previous year's importations.

Mr. GREGORY.—Woollens alone?

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Yes, "woollens, or containing wool, n.e.i." The honorable member for Corangamite (Mr. Gibson) said something about the price, but there was very little difference in the price during the twelve-month periods ending 28th February, 1920, and 28th February, 1921. Under the existing Tariff, during the twelve months of its operation, the imports of woollens and goods containing wool were more than three times the previous year's importations, and reached in value the vast sum of £6,675,000. That is a circumstance which cannot be ignored in the consideration of the Tariff. Since the war

there has been a vast extension of the woollen trade. Our home consumption represents only $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the Australian clip.

Mr. HILL.—How much greater would the local consumption have been had the woollen mills sold direct to the retailers instead of to Flinders-lane?

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That question is hardly involved in the present discussion, but I may say that there is much fallacious argument indulged in concerning the cost of distribution. It is believed to be very high, as the rate is frequently said to be from 20 per cent. to 30 per cent., but if honorable members asked the woollen manufacturers whether they could afford to distribute their own goods, even if they were paid the extra cost mentioned, which the wholesale houses now get, they would tell them that they could not do so.

Mr. GREENE.—The trouble is in many cases that they have not sufficient capital.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Of course they have not.

Mr. HILL.—Not to distribute for cash?

Sir ROBERT BEST.—My honorable friend will remember that it is the special duty of the distributing houses to distribute all classes of goods, and they are, therefore, able to distribute any particular class of goods more cheaply than the manufacturer of those goods could hope to do. There are, no doubt, individual instances where, if persons could buy at the mills, they could obtain cloth more cheaply than under existing conditions, when the cost of distribution has to be added. But if there were no organized commercial system of the distribution of goods, the result to manufacturers would be disastrous.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Some mills distribute every yard of cloth they make.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—In individual cases that may be so; but that assumes the possession by the manufacturers of capital and organization for the purpose. I have said that at present the local consumption represents only $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the Australian clip. For years we have sent away greasy wool to the extent of something like $97\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of our clip. That is a grave reflection upon ourselves. I am not an idealist; and while I would not say that it is possible within the next ten, twelve,

or even fifteen years for us to expect to send away the whole of our wool in fabric form, I do say that we should work towards the realization of that ideal as fast as we can. We should send away our wool in wool tops or yarn, and ultimately, I hope, in cloth, or other manufactured goods. It is only by giving the greatest encouragement to our woollen manufacturers that we can hope to do so. We have been pleased to learn that a considerable amount has been expended since the war in laying down woollen mill plants in this country. We have the assurance of the Minister, who speaks officially, that there is every prospect that other woollen mill plants will be laid down in the near future. Bear in mind, this expressed intention is on the basis of the existing schedule, which is a reason why it should not be reduced.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—We want more competition badly.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—We want every competition, and this is the way to secure internal competition, which is what we want. If we can get plant after plant installed in Australia by the encouragement of this great key industry, we shall be making great strides. The fact that it is a key industry, and that British manufacturers and others desire to establish woollen factories in Australia, which is the objective of a Tariff, more than justifies the Tariff now proposed. I have heard the complaint that it is insufficient for their purposes—that they could invest their capital with much greater confidence if they received greater encouragement. We have before us, however, the proposal set out in the schedule; but, nevertheless, I feel justified at this stage in pointing out that there are considerable importations of coatings, trouserings, and other like piece goods which are entering into serious competition with the output of our own mills. We have to look at this matter from a broad stand-point, and since British manufacturers are turning their attention to Australia, where our wool is immediately available for their use, and where every facility for working it up is offered, I can only say that, if they are going to establish plants here, and bring out skilled workmen to lay down new industries, we should be prepared to afford

them every encouragement. We have to look not only to the establishment of new woollen mills, but also to associated industries such as fellmongering, glue making, tanning, and other industries that are directly associated with that now under consideration. I have pleasure in supporting the Minister's proposal.

MR. RICHARD FOSTER.—Then the honorable member is not going to move for an increased duty?

SIR ROBERT BEST.—No; if I remember rightly the schedule before us provides for only a very small increase in the General Tariff.

MR. RICHARD FOSTER.—It provides for an increase of 30 per cent.

SIR ROBERT BEST.—The duty in respect of imports from Great Britain is the same as that in the Tariff of 1914, but there is a slight increase in the general Tariff. In the circumstances, therefore, the Minister's proposals are very modest, and I shall support them.

MR. JOWETT (Grampians) [3.53].—I desire to speak on behalf of a very important Australian industry which has already been much antagonized.

MR. RICHARD FOSTER.—We have heard the honorable member speak against the Australian woollen industry.

MR. JOWETT.—The honorable member has never heard me say a word against the Australian woollen mills.

MR. RICHARD FOSTER.—We have heard the honorable member complain of the prices charged for Australian woollens.

MR. JOWETT.—I have said a great deal as to the prices which the people of Australia are charged for their clothes; but this matter is altogether different from the question of the prices at which the Australian woollen mills sell their products. I hope, therefore, that the honorable member will withdraw his observation that he has heard me say anything against Australian woollen mills or the prices charged by the mills themselves.

MR. RICHARD FOSTER.—I will.

MR. JOWETT.—I wish to refer briefly to the charge that is constantly being made that during the war the woollen mills of Australia made very large profits. I was pleased to hear the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best) refer to this aspect of the matter

in his opening remarks. Many of us are exceedingly anxious that the woollen industry of Australia shall be developed to a much greater extent than it has been, and since the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster) and, possibly, others may be under the impression that I am opposed to the expansion of the woollen industry, I propose to quote certain remarks made by me at a conference, held on 10th December last, as the result of efforts made by my friend, Mr. Stirling Taylor, Director of the Bureau of Commerce and Industry, to inaugurate a campaign for the purpose of increasing the number of woollen mills in the Commonwealth. As a delegate to that conference it fell to my lot to move the following resolution:—

That this meeting cordially indorses the proposal of the Prime Minister to have inaugurated a propaganda for the purpose of largely increasing the woollen and worsted manufacturing industries of Australia.

In support of that motion I am quoted as having said with reference to prices—

We enjoyed, during the war, the benefit of the cheapest wool in the world. We should also have obtained the benefit of the cheapest clothes in the world. What is the cause of the high prices of suits? It is due to the fact that too great a percentage of the cloth is imported and the natural remedy is to encourage the increased manufacture of woollen and worsted goods here. The time has come for the citizens of Australia to be interested in the project by good propaganda work, and, in endeavouring to have mills established, we should, as far as possible, concentrate our efforts on country towns.

The actual fact with regard to the prices charged by woollen manufacturers in Australia is that during the whole period of the war and subsequently they sold their cloth at the cheapest prices at which cloth was procurable in any part of the world. That is their record for the last seven years.

MR. GREGORY.—But is it a fact that during three years of the war their profits actually exceeded the amount of their capital?

MR. JOWETT.—It may be; but taking the returns for such a short period as three years, one might arrive at a totally exaggerated view of the profits of any industry.

MR. FOLEY.—Then why cavil at the rigid control?

Mr. JOWETT. — I am dealing, not with the question of rigid control, but am dealing entirely with the question of the desirableness of increasing the manufacture of woollen goods in Australia. I rose mainly to reply to the campaign of antagonism to the Australian woollen industry which has been so sedulously fostered in different parts of the Commonwealth, on the ground that the local mills are charging excessive prices for their cloth. As a matter of fact, their prices during the war and subsequently were below those charged in any other country.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Seeing that certain mills during the war wiped out their capital cost, should they not be selling much cheaper at the present time?

Mr. JOWETT.—It may be that certain mills did wipe out their capital cost during the war, but that, of course, cannot apply to mill-owners who have not yet built their mills. I am dealing with the question of the extension of the industry which is so highly desirable in the interests of the whole of the people. I confess that I took up shares in the industry, not that I desired to make any profit, but rather to encourage its expansion. I certainly hope that the industry will be profitable; unless it is, we cannot expect an expansion of it.

Mr. BRENNAN. — Does the honorable member think that if no woollen goods had been imported during the war we would have been assured of woollen goods at cheap rates here?

Mr. JOWETT.—I do not know. I am not at all sure that if no woollen goods had been imported we should have got our clothes any cheaper. Even if the Australian woollen manufacturer had not raised his prices by one penny per yard, I do not think we should have been able, under the circumstances, to buy our made-up articles at prices lower than have prevailed. The trouble is not the price charged by the manufacturer.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Who is the culprit?

Mr. JOWETT.—The trouble arises between the persons to whom the manufacturer sells his cloth and the purchasers of suits of clothes. As to the question by the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster), I can only say that I am not so much concerned with what has been done by those woollen manufacturers

who have made large profits during the war. There is no doubt that these manufacturers are much stronger financially than ever before; but my deep concern is for the prospects of mills which we hope to see established in the future. It would not matter whether countless millions had been made during the past few years; we have to consider what reasonable prospects there are of fair profits in the case of mills which are to be established. We must remember that our local mills manufacture only a very small quantity of the wool produced in Australia.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—What do you consider fair profits?

Mr. JOWETT.—I am not now discussing the question of fair profits; no doubt we shall have an opportunity to consider that matter at some future time, when I hope all honorable members will confine themselves to the subject under discussion.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Is not 10 per cent. a fair profit?

Mr. JOWETT.—The honorable member may think so, but I candidly say that I would not invest my capital, nor would I advise my friends to invest theirs, in a venture if the maximum profit had to be 10 per cent.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I mean the dividend.

Mr. JOWETT.—In the present state of the world's industry and commerce, I do not think people could be induced to invest if the profits or dividends were limited to 10 per cent. If I were consulted by a friend as to whether he should embark his capital in a new venture, requiring new machinery and plant, and faced with all the other initial difficulties, and it was understood that legislation would be proposed to limit the profits or dividends to 10 per cent., I should either shrug my shoulders and walk away, or advise him not to take up such a foolish speculation. In my opinion, such limitation of profits and dividends is the surest way to hamper industrial enterprises.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Is not 10 per cent. a very good thing?

Mr. JOWETT.—I can only repeat that if the honorable member thinks so, I do not, under the circumstances.

Mr. LIVINGSTON.—Why not share the profits with the workmen in the mills?

Mr. JOWETT.—If the honorable member favours such a step, no doubt he will have an opportunity at some time or other in this Parliament of moving to that effect, but that is not the proposal before us now. We are considering the establishment of new mills, involving the purchase of new machinery and plant, for the manufacture of more of our wool than is manufactured at present. It is well known that during the war the prices charged by the woollen manufacturers to their customers were lower than in any other part of the world; and this, I take it, is, at all events, some reply to the charge of making undue profits.

There is another aspect of the question which I think it very important we should note. No doubt, during the last three or four years the people of Australia have had to pay extortionate and unjust rates for their clothes. I do not propose to go into details now to show how that position has arisen, except to say that, as far as I am aware, there is not one tailor in Victoria, at all events, who is able to buy his cloth at the mills; there is not one mill able to sell its output to the retail tailor.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—The mills say that they have no cloth for sale.

Mr. JOWETT.—The process is that the mills have to sell to the large wholesale houses in Flinders-lane, Melbourne, and York-street, Sydney—that is the position into which the industry has drifted. By some means or other the original cost of the cloth, after leaving the mills, and as between the wholesale house and the tailor, is almost lost or hidden in the multitude of added charges.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It is not the cloth, but the wool.

Mr. JOWETT.—I am inclined to think that it is the cloth as well as the wool. Many cases have been brought under my notice of cloth sold by the manufacturer at an exceedingly moderate price, and yet it is unobtainable by the retail tailor except at a very greatly enhanced price. In my opinion, these excessive and extortionate prices, which are still being charged, are due to a set of circumstances entirely independent of the manufacturing cost of the cloth; and, therefore, I do not think it is

fair to charge the manufacturers with taking undue advantage of their position during the war. By way of illustration, I wish to show the extreme difficulty of the position from the point of view of both the wool-grower and of the ultimate consumer. At present, raw wool is selling at the lowest price known for many years—almost at the lowest level—yet it is found that the prices of various articles of clothing, instead of decreasing, are actually increasing. I do not think the manufacturers are getting any more for their cloth.

Mr. RILEY.—There is “an honorable understanding.”

Mr. JOWETT.—I am not prepared to say even that; the reason may be one quite independent of that suggested.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The manufacturers' overhead costs have increased enormously.

Mr. JOWETT.—There is no doubt about that; so much so that, while the manufacturer may be getting his wool cheaper, it costs more than it did to turn out the cloth. That, I understand, is what the manufacturers say. However, I have been asked by tradesmen in country towns to lay before the Committee some considerations involved in this matter; and I think it is only proper that we should be fully advised of the facts. One tradesman in a country town informs me that for flannels, which last year cost him 1s. 6d., he is now charged 2s. 3d. This tradesman does not buy from the manufacturer; as I have already indicated, he cannot do so. This same man gives several similar instances, but with these I do not propose to engage honorable members. I am informed, however, that there has been a general rise in the cost of cloth and flannel, as compared with last year, although wool is now very much lower in price. The explanation given is that a good deal of this cloth is made from wool that was bought prior to the 30th June last.

Mr. RILEY.—Three years ago, probably.

Mr. JOWETT.—That may be so.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Even if that were so, they ought to average the price, and be fair.

Mr. JOWETT.—I agree with the honorable member for Melbourne Ports, and now that it is possible to buy the raw

wool so much cheaper, and in view of the fact that, so far as we know, manufacturing costs have not increased very materially during the last twelve months, the time ought not to be far distant when the cost of cloth and flannels to country drapers and storekeepers should be greatly reduced.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Prices ought to be reduced now, because for a long time mills have been buying on hand-to-mouth methods.

Mr. JOWETT.—In that case we ought to have cheaper clothing before long. It is perfectly clear that we cannot expect a revival in the wool industry, or any revival in the manufacturing industry, until the people of Australia, particularly those whose incomes are not large, are able to obtain clothing at reasonable prices.

Mr. GREENE.—We hope to see a good many new mills established in country districts at an early date.

Mr. JOWETT.—I hope so, too. Therefore, I intend to support the proposals of the Government as outlined in this item. At present prices for clothing—and this is what concerns people particularly—are preposterous. Apparently there are in the trade some people who, if they got the cloth for nothing, would not allow the general public to have clothing at a reasonable price. I have in my hand an account from a tailor for the making up of two suits of clothes for a friend of mine, who, in the ordinary course of business, obtained elsewhere the suit lengths with the object of having the material made up.

Mr. MATHEWS.—By a Collins-street firm, I suppose.

Mr. JOWETT.—No, not by a Collins-street firm. For the making of these two suits of clothes the tailor's account amounted to £16, or £8 per suit.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Do not forget the trimmings.

Mr. JOWETT.—I give the trimmings in, too. Perhaps my friend's tailor also provided the sewing thread.

Mr. FOLEY.—That firm ought to be under Vice-Regal patronage.

Mr. JOWETT.—As a matter of fact, I believe it is. Indeed, I hardly know of any firm of standing that is not under Vice-Regal patronage.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That would be a fair price for a good tailor to charge.

Mr. JOWETT.—The honorable member for Melbourne Ports, who, I believe, knows a good deal about the business, declares that £8 per suit would be a fair charge for the making up of material. I do not agree with him. But here is the difficult position in which we find ourselves. The whole world is suffering because people are being charged preposterous prices for clothing, and there is a general disinclination to buy new suits of clothes until prices recede to a reasonable level, with the result that mills are partially idle all over the world. Australia is probably the one country in the world where the woollen manufacturers are fully employed. I am delighted to think that, as regards Australia, this is so. But so long as people are prepared to pay preposterous prices—I note that the honorable member for Melbourne Ports, referring to the case I have just quoted, says the price is fair—so long will this deplorable state of affairs continue. This brings me to another point. The other day while walking down Collins-street with a friend, I mentioned this particular case, and he said to me, "Well, I cannot get a suit of clothes from my tailor for less than £14 14s." I then took him to an establishment, not far away where suits of clothes are advertised as made to order for £5 5s. It is quite likely that they may not be made in the same expensive fashion as my friend's suits are, but in the shop windows we saw a splendid display of exceedingly good tweeds—Australian tweeds, I suppose—suits being advertised at £5 5s., made to order after measure.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Those suits never see an inch-tape.

Mr. JOWETT.—There was a very fine range of good tweeds.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I will wager anything you like that suits made at that price are never touched by the hand of a journeyman tailor.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I cannot see how they would be worth any more, though I may be a bad judge.

Mr. JOWETT.—It is suggested by the honorable member for Melbourne Ports that these suits, advertised at £5 5s. to measure, could not have been made to measure or cut in the ordinary fashion and sold at that figure.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The suits you get for £5 5s. now are fit only for iron-holders.

Mr. JOWETT.—The cloth is excellent, and it is idle to suggest, if I may say so, that because the suits are sold at £5 5s. they cannot be cut and measured in the ordinary way.

Mr. MATHEWS. — They are made of blotting paper.

Mr. JOWETT.—No. They are made of good cloth. No doubt the honorable member will remember reading some evidence given by a tailor before a Royal Commission in Sydney not very long ago. This man advertised suits of clothes made to order for £5 5s.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—They would be made in a factory.

Mr. JOWETT.—That may be so. This man stated in his evidence that he was charged only 28s. 6d. for these suits, which he bought from a manufacturer of ready-made suits. I suppose that they were cut up and made up by machinery, but they did not cost that tailor more than £1 8s. 6d. per suit.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I can assure the honorable member that the tweed must have been stolen, and that nothing could have been paid for the making up of the suits.

Mr. JOWETT.—I do not believe that the tweed was stolen, or that no wages were paid for the making up of the suits. The makers simply did not demand exorbitant profits for the services they rendered.

Mr. MATHEWS.—It is a fairy yarn.

Mr. JOWETT.—It is not. This evidence was given before the Fair Prices Commission in Sydney, as the honorable member for South Sydney (Mr. Riley) can bear me out.

Mr. RILEY.—That is correct.

Mr. JOWETT.—I am reminded by the honorable member for Corangamite (Mr. Gibson) about the information furnished to those honorable members who paid a visit to the Commonwealth Woollen Mills at Geelong. We saw the wool from which the cloth was made. It was good Australian wool. We saw the cloth in every process of manufacture. It was good cloth. The manager assured us that it was sent to the Commonwealth Clothing Factory to be turned into civilian suits of clothes for returned soldiers at a cost of under 30s.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I will get the honorable member one of those suits if he will undertake to wear it.

Mr. JOWETT.—I regret that I cannot accept the kind offer of my honorable friend—at least not on the spur of the moment. I merely mention these facts in order to show that the actual cost of the cloth is not the greatest element in the price of a suit of clothes. The colossal difficulty is how to arrive at a remedy. My own view is that the high prices which so many people are willing to pay, are due to ignorance and folly on the part of those consumers who will not take the trouble to go from one district where high prices are asked into another district where they can buy to advantage.

I support the proposed duties in the schedule, but there are one or two articles now imported which escape high duties which are serious competitors with the product of our own woollen mills. One is cotton tweed. This, I understand, is made wholly of cotton, but is got up in such a fashion that people buy it under the belief that it contains a certain amount of wool. It is a serious competitor with our own woollen tweeds. The very name "tweed," when applied to cotton goods, is a fraud.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It is a competitor because cotton tweeds are worn by people who cannot afford to buy a better article.

Mr. JOWETT.—It is a competitor because some people cannot tell the difference between cotton tweeds and woollen tweeds. Another article is a worsted cloth or flannel which contains an admixture of cotton, and is bought by people under the belief that it is composed entirely of wool.

Mr. MATHEWS.—A small percentage of cotton is not hurtful.

Mr. JOWETT.—Possibly; but when a woman who is buying flannel for her children wants woollen flannel, she ought to be able to get it and not a cloth made partly of cotton. Considerable quantities of goods which are imported under the Tariff heading of woollen-piece goods contain cotton.

Mr. FOWLER.—Considerable quantities of such goods are made in Australia.

Mr. JOWETT. — That is another point, but we are not now dealing with goods manufactured in Australia. In any case, even if some of the mills in Australia use a certain proportion of cotton in the manufacture of blankets or flannels, it is done because they are obliged to compete with similar imported goods. A higher duty should be placed on woollen goods containing cotton in order to discourage their importation. We cannot expect increased sums of money to be invested in our woollen mills, which are engaged in the manufacture of cloth wholly from wool, if they are to be called upon to compete with imported goods which people buy under the belief that they are composed entirely of wool, but which contain both wool and cotton.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The importer should be compelled to state on the article what it contains.

Mr. GREENE.—Under the Commerce Act, a flannel or material of that kind must be described. If an article contains cotton as well as wool, it must bear that impress on it when it comes into the country.

Mr. JOWETT.—Yes; but what steps are taken to insure that the nature of the goods is stamped on the article when the housewife buys it?

Mr. GREENE.—Unfortunately we have not the constitutional power to control that, but it is within the purview of the States.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The States can do it?

Mr. FOLEY.—They are doing it.

Mr. JOWETT.—Is it impossible for the Commonwealth to protect the woman who goes to buy cloth made of wool to be made into clothes for her children? The sale of woollen goods adulterated with cotton in such a way as to lead the purchaser to believe that the article is pure wool amounts to fraud, for I say unhesitatingly that usually no man or woman willingly buys flannel or worsted goods in the knowledge that they contain cotton.

Mr. GREENE.—There are some well known mixtures of wool and cotton, such as Vyella.

Mr. JOWETT.—One person in ten may know that the article she is buying is partly wool and partly cotton, but in regard to the bulk of cotton mixtures, I

believe the people are having imposed upon them a mild fraud. I would have preferred a proposal to place a higher duty on worsted goods, and all others containing cotton, than is imposed on purely woollen goods.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—What are the unfortunate people to do who cannot buy woollen goods?

Mr. JOWETT.—The unfortunate people are those who are defrauded into buying something that is not all wool, and they ought to be protected.

Mr. RILEY (South Sydney) [4.32].—I was pleased to hear the last two speakers say that they are anxious to protect the manufacturers, but I heard not a word from them about the protection of the public. Factories for the manufacture of woollen goods have been established in the Commonwealth, but of what advantage to the people were they during the war? They were of no help to the country at all, because they regulated the price of their goods according to the price of the imported article. If imported cloth cost 30s. or 35s. per yard, the price of the locally made article was raised to the same figure. There was no competition between the manufacturers, and the fact of having these industries in our midst did not help to keep prices down. We have been told that some of the factories worked three shifts during the war; if so, they were trebling their turnover and profits, and could afford to be generous by reducing the price to the consumer. In answer to a question I asked during the war, I was told that the highest price received by the Commonwealth Woollen Mills at Geelong for best navy-blue serge was 6s. 6d. per yard. That factory is operated under model conditions; it pays the highest prices for its wool, and the highest wages for its labour. Yet of the three prices of material given to me in answer to my question, the highest was 6s. 6d.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member makes me smile.

Mr. LISTER.—The cloths quoted in the reply to the honorable member were not the best made by the factory.

Mr. RILEY.—My question related to the best cloths, and the prices I received varied from, I think, 5s. 6d. to 6s. 6d. I understand that the lowest figure at which cloth could be purchased from

the private woollen mills during the war was 12s. to 13s. per yard, or 100 per cent. more than was being received for the product of the Commonwealth Mill at Geelong.

Mr. GREGORY.—Were we not told that the Geelong mill was producing at 4s. per yard?

Mr. RILEY.—At any rate, the Geelong mill was making a profit at half the price which the private manufacturers were charging. I am anxious to see industries established in the Commonwealth; but what protection has the consumer if the manufacturers are to combine to manipulate prices? I would be prepared to give local industry every encouragement if we could make some law to provide that when manufacturers, in combination, raise the price of an article, the duty on imported articles shall be removed, in order to allow foreign competition to operate. To-day the manufacturers are asking for a duty of 45 per cent. on woollen goods; and when we give them that they do not care what happens to the consumer. As a Parliament we shall be neglecting our duty if we have regard to the interests of only one section of the community. I do not care what duty is imposed, so long as the local consumer gets a fair deal; but during the war the manufacturers gave the Australian public no consideration. Manufacturers in other countries had to pay high prices for their raw wool, high freights, and high wages, whilst the local manufacturer had to pay no freights, received his wool at a reasonable price, and had not to contend with any considerable increase in wages. But, on account of the way in which they treated the public, I have lost a good deal of my faith in them. When they say that they cannot sell their products except through Flinders-lane and York-street, they disclose a lack of organizing capacity. I believe the real explanation is that they are in combination with the wholesalers. If a person applies to a mill for two or three lengths of cloth for suits, he is referred to Flinders-lane or York-street. I am told by a gentleman from China that in that country there is an unlimited market for Australian woollen goods. Therefore, we ought to encourage the establishment of manufactories in Australia; but, when we do that, what guarantee shall we have

that the purchasing public of Australia will derive any advantage? Unless the Government are prepared to introduce a Bill which will give this Parliament some control over prices of goods protected by the Tariff, we shall not be justified in imposing high duties. I represent a working-class constituency, in which the people cannot afford to pay eight guineas for a suit of clothes. During the war they were robbed by the manufacturers, and even now they cannot buy clothes because of the high prices. In New South Wales the manufacturers are doubling their establishments, and some of them have made 100 per cent. profit. This Parliament will not do its duty if it keeps the Tariff rates high and allows what I have complained of to continue. I shall vote for the 45 per cent. rate in this case, but on the understanding that the Government will bring down a measure which will enable us to reduce it in the event of a combination to keep up prices.

Mr. FOLEY (Kalgoorlie) [4.42].—I am not surprised that the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best) should ask for high duties on all imports, but I cannot agree with some of the statements made by the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett). He said that during the war Australian manufacturers had had a bad time. As a matter of fact, that is not so. He drew attention to the rigid Government control that was then applied to their industry, but that control did not affect the production of woollen manufactures for sale to civilians. It applied only to the production for military purposes, and the effect of it was that our soldiers were better clothed than any others. Had it not been for our rigid Government control, we should have had to pay much more for military clothing. During the war Australian manufacturers had this great advantage over British manufacturers, that they could buy their wool at the first appraisement, that is, they got it at the lowest price for which wool could be obtained within the Empire. Should not Australian consumers have benefited on that account? If with up-to-date machinery and wool at a very low price our manufacturers could not produce cheaply, it is worth considering whether

anything is to be gained by a high Tariff on woollens, and whether it will not result in the people of Australia having to pay high prices for clothing. I know of a draper in Perth who bought flannel in New Zealand at 18s. and sold it to a man in Sydney for 22s., by whom it was sold to a Melbourne firm for 28s. before it had left New Zealand. A high Tariff could not prevent dealings of that kind, which increase the price of clothing. Only $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of our wool is manufactured in Australia, and I would like to see more manufactured here; but Australian manufacturers should give fair terms to the Australian users of woollens. If the establishment of woollen mills here is to mean only the making of a few millionaires at the expense of the general community, I say that we shall gain little or nothing from it.

Mr. McGRATH.—Cannot we deal with millionaires here better than abroad? The men belonging to your party, of course, would not deal with them.

Mr. FOLEY.—Interference to prevent imposition upon the public is as likely to come from me as from the honorable member. I have never lost an opportunity to do what I could in the interests of the community at large, and when the occasion arises my honorable friend will find that he is not the only one fighting for the people.

Mr. McGRATH.—The flag would be waved and you would drop down.

Mr. FOLEY.—The flag that was waved when I was elected is the best flag that has been flown in Australia.

Mr. McGRATH.—You got in on the flag.

Mr. FOLEY.—I am proud of my connexion with the flag. I would sooner be associated with it than with the red flag. The honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) said that our manufacturers were at a disadvantage when compared with those of other countries, because the latter used a certain quantity of cotton with their woollen goods; but a little later he told us that Australian manufacturers also used cotton, and that they did this because their competitors abroad did it. If it is wrong to adulterate woollen goods, it is as wrong for Australian manufacturers as for British manufacturers to do it; but there is no-

thing in the Tariff to prevent it from being done. Some of the State laws require the quality or contents to be marked on all articles exposed for sale. Such laws prevail in Western Australia, New South Wales, and, to some extent, in Queensland, and the sooner they become general throughout Australia the better. I hold the view that there is no reason for increasing the duties on woollens. A suit of clothes such as in 1914 a working man paid £5 10s. for—

Mr. MATHEWS.—£3 10s.

Mr. FOLEY.—Very few working men in Western Australia paid less than £5 or £5 10s., and for suits of the same material they would to-day pay £11 or £12. That is not right. The present high prices will not be reduced by the imposition of a high Tariff. I know of no argument to support the raising of duties on woollens. If our factories are working to their fullest capacity, as they were doing during the war, the profits must be ample, and I do not see why Australian-made cloth should not be sent to Great Britain for sale. The present conditions should induce British woollen manufacturers to establish mills here. The rates of wages have greatly increased in Britain since the war, and now do not differ much from those paid here.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I do not think that the employees are paid less in Great Britain than in Australia.

Mr. FOLEY.—That being so, should not our manufacturers increase their plants, and do all they can to manufacture goods for export?

Mr. MATHEWS.—There are other factors to be taken into account.

Mr. FOLEY.—I am for keeping out foreign-made goods; but we have had an object-lesson during the past three years at least. Japan was sending stuff here. She had the greatest chance in the world of dumping her products upon Australia, but she has "missed the bus" upon every occasion. Everbody knows that the manufactured goods which come from Japan can absolutely be torn into threads. After Japanese cotton goods have undergone a single washing one is able to see through them. I have no doubt that there has been profiteering in woollen goods. I do not care whether it has been our manufacturers or our distributors who have been guilty of this practice, but certainly the people of Australia have not been getting their goods

at a price which would have given the local manufacturer a fair profit, whilst allowing a reasonable cost for distribution. The duty of the Government will not end until the consumer has been protected from further exploitation in the matter of woollen goods.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [4.57].—Every honorable member will appreciate the need which exists for building up an industry like the woollen industry. It is an industry which ought to be established in our midst. We have the raw material in abundance, plenty of labour is available, and there is no reason why we should not establish a big woollen industry here. Indeed, I am satisfied that if it be established upon right lines we shall become very big exporters of woollen goods. But the industry will not be built up by spoon-feeding. It must be established upon a sound and solid basis.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—How are we to build it up if we do not spoon-feed or shovel-feed it?

Mr. GREGORY.—But the honorable member must realize that prices are abnormally high to-day—that they are 200 or 300 per cent. more than they were in pre-war days. With the natural protection which our manufacturers enjoy, and seeing that the wages now being paid in the Old Country are pretty well equal to those which are being paid in Australia—

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—What about the wages paid in Japan?

Mr. GREGORY.—We are not getting woollen goods from Japan. I am prepared to give our manufacturers a margin of 15 or 20 per cent. in excess of the duty levied upon goods from the Old Country.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—Wool tops are being manufactured in Japan from Australian wool.

Mr. GREGORY.—But the Japanese have not sent them here.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—They will do so.

Mr. GREGORY.—I hope that later we shall have a discussion as to whether our preferential Tariff ought not to be extended to include goods from Canada and New Zealand. I desire that goods

from the United Kingdom shall be admitted at a lower rate of duty than is here proposed. Consequently I move—

That after "30 per cent." in sub-item (F) the following words be inserted:—"And on and after 26th May, 1921, ad. val. British, 25 per cent."

Mr. MATHEWS.—Does the honorable member think that he has any hope of carrying his proposal?

Mr. GREGORY.—I do not care. I want the honorable member's constituents to realize that my object is to reduce the cost of living. In this connexion I propose a little later to quote a letter from a draper which was published in the *Argus* only a short time ago, in which he points out that flannels and blankets could not be supplied here—that an ordinary draper could not get the goods he wanted, either from the local merchant or the manufacturer. As the Minister knows perfectly well, I quoted a portion of that letter in my general remarks upon the Tariff.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—Does the honorable member say that we cannot manufacture sufficient blankets for our own requirements?

Mr. GREGORY.—Yes; that is the awful position.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—How shall we overcome it?

Mr. GREGORY.—The following is an extract from a letter from the Chamber of Commerce in Sydney to the Minister upon this subject:—

Prior to the war, a satisfactory pair of double-bed blankets was sold by the Australian manufacturer at about 13s. 6d. per pair delivered. The lowest grade English double-bed blankets could, at the same period, be landed, duty at 25 per cent. paid, for about 11s. 6d.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—When was that?

Mr. GREGORY.—Just prior to the war.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—They were nearly all cotton rugs.

Mr. GREGORY.—The letter continues—

But these were very rough, and so obviously inferior to the local article that the Australian blankets always sold in preference.

The letter, which was written in 1920, goes on to point out that the wholesalers could not get from the local manufacturers

a supply of blankets in excess of one-fourth or one-fifth of their orders. It says—

The second phase is that local blanket manufacturers have informed the wholesale and retail traders of Australia that they will not receive more than one-fifth or one-fourth of their orders. A low-grade English blanket costs, at present, 37s. 6d. per pair at the mills. With a 25 per cent. duty these could not be landed under about 52s. 6d. and 63s. respectively. The duty is about 11s. in the one case, and 13s. in the other. It will be seen, therefore, that, though the rate of duty is unchanged, the amount collected will be from five to six times the pre-war figures.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The blankets one can purchase to-day are dearer than those quoted by the honorable member.

Mr. GREGORY.—Can the honorable member give me any reason why they should be dearer? It is not the cost of wool.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—They should not be dearer.

Mr. GREGORY.—I have been trying for a little while to obtain the figures which were quoted by Senator Russell in answer to questions which were put to him regarding the cost of woollen goods. Before this debate closes, I hope that I shall be in possession of those figures, so that I may be able to show what was the cost of the Government-manufactured article. Honorable members will then see how the Australian manufacturer took every advantage of the abnormal conditions which prevailed during the war period.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—Did not the British manufacturer do likewise?

Mr. GREGORY.—But the British manufacturer had to pay an enormous price for his wool as compared with the Australian manufacturer. When we entered into an agreement with the Old Country for the sale of our wool, it was stipulated that our manufacturers should get their wool at the appraised price. In England, however, our wool was sold at 200 and 300 per cent., and in some instances at 400 per cent., in excess of the appraised price. I am not endeavouring to build up a case for the British manufacturer, but I desire to give him a fair deal. If, in addition to the natural protection which our manufacturers enjoy, we grant them a protection of 25 per cent., we shall be doing something to conserve the welfare of our own manufacturers. A blanket

which cost 15s. 6d. before the war ought not to cost more than 22s. 6d. or 23s. to-day. A similar remark is applicable to flannels. In this connexion I desire to quote the letter to which I previously alluded, and which was published in the *Argus* some time ago. The writer was, of course, dealing only with the cheaper class of flannels.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member knows that at that time there was a shortage of blankets caused by the Government ordering the manufacture of flannels.

Mr. GREENE.—The position which is set out in that letter is not the position which obtains to-day.

Mr. GREGORY.—I am not affirming that it is. My contention is that the requirements of our own people should be our first consideration. When the Minister knew that it was absolutely impossible to insure an adequate supply of blankets to our people, and when the cheaper class of flannels were urgently required by them, he made no effort to supply their needs. It is true that he has not increased the duty upon woollen goods coming from the United Kingdom levied under the 1914 Tariff, but upon many other lines he has increased the cost of living to the people. Unless we reduce the cost of living, how shall we get back to normal conditions, when many persons who are now unemployed were employed in the mining, pastoral, agricultural, and other industries?

Mr. MATHEWS.—It is not by way of the imposition of duty that we can hope to reduce the cost of living, but by attacking high profits.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member does not believe in competition. I do. I strive for the building up of individuality among the people.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—There is no such thing as competition in the commercial world to-day. Everything is controlled by combines and understandings.

Mr. GREGORY.—The wider we open the door the more we induce competition. I do not believe there is an honorable member in this House who would advocate a Free Trade policy. Living conditions in Australia are better than in other countries, but we must take great care not to cut off the huge sources of production which have helped to build

Australia's prosperity. The Mount Morgan mines have closed down. In 1918 that industry turned out more than £1,000,000 worth of copper and gold. The Mount Cuthbert mines also have closed. They, too, during one year produced more than £1,000,000 worth of metal. These great mines employed more than 10,000 people. I think that I am making a reasonable computation when I say that every one of those employees carried at least five other people on his back. The Mount Lyell mines have also ceased activity. With the shutting down of these great producing sources it follows that business people involved must be either ruined or compelled to remove elsewhere. Moreover, our railways are made unprofitable; and if, owing to the cessation of great producing activities, railway revenue falls away, how can the Governments concerned continue to pay employees reasonable wages to meet the high cost of living? When this Parliament makes its contribution to the maintenance and increase of the cost of living by means of the Tariff, we merely accentuate Australia's wretched condition. Labour has its rights; and I, for one, would strenuously fight for the maintenance of those rights. But if lower wages must now be accepted by labour—as I believe they must be—we must do our part by whatever means are possible in reducing the high cost of living as it bears upon labour. The only way is to bring about more competition. We must endeavour to destroy combines and honorable understandings, whether they be among manufacturers or merchants. It is preposterous, for instance, that a pair of boots costing 12s. or 13s. in the factory should cost a buyer 30s. in the shop. That is due to want of competition.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—Are there not enough boot manufacturers in Australia? Is there not a glut of boots on the market?

Mr. GREGORY. — Australia surely ought to be exporting boots all over the world. Hides may be purchased now for next to nothing. Honorable members opposite will, perhaps, appreciate the following letter which was recently published in the *Argus*. The writer says—

Notwithstanding the glut of wool, and more particularly of the lower-priced wools, the

people of Australia are still without supplies of woollen goods in the popular qualities, such as natural flannels and flannel mixtures from 1s. 3d. to 2s. 6d. a yard, blankets at moderate prices, and tweeds suitable for every-day wear. These are not imported goods, but goods that have for years past been successfully made in large quantities by Australian mills. Winter is now approaching, and no supplies are to be obtained, and people everywhere are asking, "What is the reason?" During the war, and since its conclusion, supplies were unavoidably curtailed, the consequence being that considerable quantities are urgently required for immediate use, but up till the present none seems to be available, nor (as far as can be ascertained) are likely to be. Is there any reason for this continued scarcity, and, if so, what is the reason? I am to-day in receipt of a letter from a leading Melbourne warehouse, which I enclose as proof of the correctness of my statement, informing me (in response to an order for these goods) that they are still unable to supply men's flannel undershirts, or natural flannels by the yard, adding that "flannels are unprocureable in Melbourne." It is safe to say that thousands of working men in Victoria alone will want flannel shirts this winter.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Does the honorable member believe that the *Argus* gives a "damn" whether the working man has a flannel shirt this winter or not?

Mr. GREGORY.—When I notice the way in which some honorable members opposite cast their votes upon questions of this kind, I wonder whether they care at all about the poor working man. However, I am not quoting the *Argus*, but a letter which appeared in its columns; and I would not be quoting it but that all the information which I have obtained goes to bear out the statements of the writer. He continues—

And hundreds of shops are in the same position as ourselves, not having a yard of low or medium priced flannel in stock for their customers. Further, there are practically no stocks of moderately-priced men's ready-made suits, in either the wholesale or retail trade, and, as I am given to understand, there are none of the cheaper makes of strong tweeds available to make them with. Again I say, "What is the reason?" The time has come now when ample supplies should be forthcoming. As further proof of scarcity, I enclose advertisements from leading retailers (which are typical of many others), showing that their lowest quoted lines are:—Flannels, 2s. 11d. yard; 1½ (or double-bed) blankets, 57s. 6d. pair.

I do not know whether honorable members are aware of the exact nature of the proposal emanating from the Victorian Chamber of Manufactures. That body is asking, in regard to cotton tweeds, that

there be an increase of 6d. per yard, plus 60 per cent. Honorable members are here to see a reasonable thing done by the Australian manufacturer, but it is our duty also to safeguard the interests of the people. Personally, I would not stand for any such proposal as this. Where there are high rates of duty, the people have to pay, and they have to pay twofold. The difference between the amount paid in 1913 and the sum which the public had to pay for the same goods in 1920, owing to increased duties, aggregates £127,000. In 1919-20 the Commonwealth authorities collected £1,103,000 in duty upon woollens alone. But before those goods could get to the people their prices were increased by 50 to 60 per cent. Without doubt, the Australian manufacturer has taken fullest advantage of the world's market conditions.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—The honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) stated that the Australian manufacturer of woollen materials was not responsible for the high prices charged to the public. It must be the man in between.

Mr. GREGORY.—Even that journal which has been doing so much in advocacy of prohibition, namely, the *Industrial Australian*, showed that the woollen mills of Australia had made a profit amounting to more than the equal of the whole of their capital in less than three years. Was that not abnormal? It demonstrates that these people have taken full, and, indeed, undue, advantage of the opportunities afforded by the condition of the world's markets.

Mr. LAZZARINI.—What did the Coats people "rake off" from the people of Australia, and from all over the world, during the war?

Mr. GREGORY.—Their profits were enormous—terrible, in fact. The Imperial Government should have forced them to disgorge. There should have been special legislation passed to meet such circumstances. The country would have been justified in demanding that every penny of those abnormal war-time profits should be sequestered to the Crown. I would make it a criminal offence for commercial combines to fix the price of any commodity.

Mr. MATHEWS.—If the Australian woollen manufacturers make excessive profits we can tax them here, but we can-

not deal with such firms as J. and P. Coats.

Mr. GREGORY.—I quite understand that. The honorable member does not advocate high duties for the purpose of placing money in the hands of those controlling these industries, but with the idea of improving the conditions of those engaged in similar undertakings in Australia. The honorable member who has just interjected believes that in assisting to encourage local industries he is improving the conditions of the workers in Australia.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That is so.

Mr. GREGORY.—Does the honorable member believe that by imposing high duties the working people of Australia have received any benefits? Within the last two or three days at a conference of the Labour party—I think it was in Sydney—one of the leading members of the party said that the working people were no better off, although they are receiving higher wages, than they were before the war.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member cannot judge the whole party by the expression of some crank.

Mr. GREGORY.—No. But it shows that there are members of the party to which the honorable member belongs who believe that the wage-earners are no better off to-day than they were five or six years ago. The position in Australia is exactly the same as it is in other countries. I have in my possession a statement made by a Canadian manufacturer during the war period, who said that his factory was not built for the honour and glory of God; but for the purpose of making profit for the shareholders. The Canadian Council of Agriculture states—

The twenty-six cotton mills in Canada pay less to their employees than the woollen mills, but they get more in return in the form of profits. It has already been shown, from the evidence submitted at Ottawa, last year, that the Dominion Textile Company actually realized 310 per cent. profits on its capital in the year 1918. The returns to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics show that 25.8 per cent. profit was earned in 1918 upon the capital of the entire Canadian cotton industry. The Canadian cotton manufacturer is not only grinding these profits out of a poorly paid lot of employees, but also out of every man, woman, and child throughout the Dominion who enters a shop to buy some sort of cotton

goods. He enjoys Tariff protection on his manufactured product to the extent of 25 to 32½ per cent.; and, in addition, may import his raw materials, such as raw cotton, dyes, &c., free. In the fiscal year 1918-19 some 112,000,000 lbs. of raw cotton, valued at \$34,000,000 entered Canada free of duty. In this way twenty-six cotton plants in Canada reap the benefit of both Free Trade and Protection, and in doing so, pay as little as possible to labour, and extract as much as possible in the form of profits.

MR. RICHARD FOSTER.—By whom was that written?

MR. GREGORY.—The statement was issued by the Canadian Council of Agriculture. The following is most important, and applies more particularly to this Parliament:—

For forty years Canada has had government by a class, the class, namely, that was interested in factories. The factory was their only idea. So long as that was left intact they were willing to surrender all else, and pay any blackmail to farmers and labour alike. They lost all political principles, and missed the very aim of life. One of themselves spoke the truth in the sordid expression, "A factory is not run for the glory of God." Neither did he know how true a thing he said nor how subversive it was.

I believe that in many instances honorable members have been very much impressed by the statements made by the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) who, in collecting his facts, has to depend to a large extent on the assistance of his officers. I have no desire to reflect on the Minister for having made a statement which, on the evidence submitted, has been shown to be incorrect, but he took me to task when I made a statement concerning the first Tariff schedule which I had before me, and rightly so, because I was slightly in error. Honorable members will recollect that when the Minister was introducing the Tariff he pointed out that Free Trade England allowed certain portions of her trade to drift to other countries, and that many men were beneath the sod to-day because of that fact. He went on to say—

The manufacture of cardigan jackets and other knitted woollen goods is a case in point. These garments were sorely needed by the troops in the first bitter winter in France, when they went down in hundreds of thousands to pneumonia. England had the wool and the machinery for the manufacture of cardigan jackets, but she had not got, and for a time did not produce, the knitting needles for the machines.

That point was questioned at the time by several honorable members. I have before me a copy of a letter from Colonel H. C. Fernyhough, for Director of Equipment and Ordnance Stores, War Office, dated 28th July, 1920, in which he says—

With reference to Board of Trade letter No. I.M. 2189 of the 22nd ultimo, I am directed to inform you that exhaustive inquiries have been made respecting the statement which accompanied your letter. It is probable that the trade were largely dependant on Germany for the supply of hosiery needles before the war, but no difficulties were experienced in obtaining supplies of cardigan jackets from the trade, and, as will be seen from the attached statement, no delay took place in meeting demands from France during the early part of the winter 1914. During the period 1st August, 1914, to 31st March, 1915, contracts were placed for over 3,000,000 cardigan jackets, and the whole of this quantity was duly delivered to time, with but very few exceptions.

MR. MATHEWS.—That is one man's statement, which may be contradicted by another.

MR. GREGORY.—That is a statement from the War Office.

MR. GREENE.—I will give the honorable member my authority for my statement.

MR. GREGORY.—The Minister gave us to understand that men were lying beneath the sod because knitting needles were not available, and that, of course, would impress some honorable members, but it would not have much weight with those who gave the matter careful consideration. I was anxious to quote that letter to prove that the Minister was wrongly advised.

MR. RICHARD FOSTER.—I am not so sure about that. We could not get them at any price.

MR. GREGORY.—I am not dealing with the position in Australia. I am referring to the position in England, and so was the Minister.

MR. RICHARD FOSTER.—There is no increase upon the former British preferential duty.

MR. GREGORY.—There has been an increase since Parliament last dealt with the Tariff.

MR. GREENE.—It has been 30 per cent. since 1914.

MR. GREGORY.—I am referring to the increase in duty since the House last

dealt with the Tariff. Parliament was not consulted in 1914, and in dealing with increased rates of duty we have to compare the existing rates with those imposed by Parliament, and not by the Minister. I am quite aware that a short validating Act was passed by Parliament, but the individual increases were not before honorable members. The reasons for any decreases or increases which have been made since 1911 should be fully explained to honorable members; but, up to the present, no such information has been given by the Minister. We have always been under the impression that as industries were established, and we became self-supporting, the duties would decrease; but such has not been the case.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Does not the honorable member realize that if we reduce our Customs duties, the revenue will suffer.

Mr. GREGORY.—That is not so. The Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook) knows that if the duties are too high he will not get any revenue at all from this source, and that the abnormal conditions which prevail to-day are not likely to continue for any time. We are likely to receive an enormous revenue from Customs duties this year; but I do not think the Treasurer is foolish enough to deny that next year's revenue from Customs will be 25 per cent. or 30 per cent. lower than it is this year, because, with the imposition of heavy Customs duties, and reduced primary production, it will be impossible for the people to purchase to the same extent.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The honorable member should cheer up; we have had a good rain.

Mr. GREGORY.—The interjection reminds me that without the increase of our primary productions, and the revenue from them all, any discussion we may have about the building up of Australian industries is absolutely useless. I would do nothing to injure Australian industries, but I want to see fair conditions for the people of this country, and at the same time to give some help to the Motherland.

Mr. FOWLER (Perth) [5.41].—The debate on this item is an echo, though a very faint one, of some of the homeric struggles we have had in this House in the past over the same item. I do not

know whether interest in the Tariff has declined, but it has seemed to me that we hear much less on both sides of Tariff questions than we used to do when Tariffs were under consideration in this House in years gone by. It may be that we have all become such convinced Protectionists that there is now only one side to any Tariff question. It may be that the Government are in such an impregnable position that a few honorable members like myself feel that it is quite futile to attempt even to criticise them. However, on this particular item I believe it is the duty of honorable members who represent large sections of middle and working-class people to make some protest against what appears to me to be a quite unreasonable increase of duty. The manufacture of woollen fabrics from Australian wool is one which we all desire to see developed. For many years past, I have heard of only one method by which it can be developed, and that is by imposing Customs duties on imported articles that come into competition with the products of local factories. I am afraid that the stimulus given to the local industry in that way has not been very effective up to date. If we make the Tariff wall too high, instead of stimulating Australian production we shall create such an artificial and unnatural atmosphere for it that it will languish rather than increase in strength. We heard in past years a great many arguments, put sometimes with a good deal of force, as to the necessity for protecting this and other Australian industries against the sweated and pauperized labour of Great Britain. That was always a very strong argument in the mouths of extreme Protectionists in the old days, when Tariffs were under discussion. They pointed triumphantly to the low wages paid in Great Britain and the long hours of labour there. They contrasted these with Australian conditions, and showed to their own satisfaction that Australia needed Protection on that account. That argument has gone by the board. The workers in Great Britain are to-day obtaining as high wages and working as short hours as are workers in Australia, in this industry in particular. Now that that argument has disappeared, the industrious propagandists who are able to produce a book like that before me, which is called on

the outside *The Australian Tariff Handbook*, but which on the inside gives a list of industries that need Protection, have been deprived of their strong argument relating to the sweated and pauperized labour of Great Britain, and are compelled to turn to a remoter part of the world to discover a reason why the duty on these goods should be raised still higher, they have discovered that there is danger to this industry from Japan. I suppose that by-and-bye, when in the course of events that danger no longer exists, these industrious people will have to travel still further, perhaps to the planet Mars, in order to fortify Australian Protection of those menaces which have played such an important part in scaring these people of Australia.

MR. CONSIDINE.—We shall have wiped out both Protection and Free Trade by that time.

MR. FOWLER.—I hope before I sit down to make a suggestion which, if adopted, should wipe out one of the worst evils at present existing. I think I may claim to have a fairly extensive knowledge of Tariff matters. I was a member of a Royal Commission appointed in 1904 to go into the whole question of rearranging the Tariff for Australia. The work of that Commission continued until 1907. It took the members of the Commission all over Australia; witnesses of every kind and class were examined at considerable length; and the Commission reported to Parliament the result of its investigations. There was a difference of opinion on the Commission. I can claim that I represented that body of opinion in Australia, stronger than now, which regarded the interests of the consumers as of some little importance. I was prepared to recognise the necessity of protecting Australian industries against anything and everything in the nature of unfair competition from the outside world. I still maintain that attitude. If I can discover that there is unfair competition from the outside world against any Australian industry, that industry will have my protection. But beyond that, I want to say at once, I am not prepared to go. I believe that Australian brains, muscle, and energy are equal to the best in the world. I believe that, given a fair deal, they can stand against any competition. It seems

to me that those industries in Australia that have best succeeded in the past are those that have had the least measure of Protection. So it will undoubtedly be, so long as Australia remains free and independent.

THE TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Atkinson).—I remind the honorable member that sub-item F is before the Committee.

MR. FOWLER.—I am keeping a great deal more closely to the question than did some of the speakers who preceded me; but, coming directly to the subject of discussion, I want to remind the Committee that, as a part of the work done by the Tariff Commission, there is a volume before me giving reports and recommendations signed by four members of the Commission, of whom I was one. I look at the volume with mingled feelings of pride and regret, because I happen to have written most of it myself. I was nearly killed in the process; and if I had had the least idea that it was going to receive so little consideration as it did in subsequent years, I am not sure that I would have sweated my brains very much over it. In this volume there are some observations on Tariff matters that are still of some little interest. One of the observations has reference to the woollen industry, and to the so-called competition that it had to meet at that particular time from Great Britain. With other members of the Commission I went into the question of the cost of sending our wool to Great Britain and bringing it back here in the manufactured form. We found that in those days the cost of shipping our wool to Great Britain, the handling of it at the ports, putting it on the railroads, the cost of railage to the factories in England, the cost of sending it back to Australia in the manufactured form, with all charges for insurance, commission, and everything else, represented a natural protection of about 25 per cent. for the Australian-manufactured article. That natural protection has been very much increased of late. I can safely say that in regard to these woollen goods it represents to-day no less than 30 per cent. I am putting it at a low figure, and, therefore, I say that the actual protection which the Government are proposing for the benefit of the woollen

manufacturers of Australia is 60 per cent. If that is held to be not more than enough I shall be very much surprised, indeed. During the war Australian manufacturers had a magnificent opportunity to commend themselves to the people of Australia. I say without hesitation that the bulk of them failed dismally and disastrously to do so. They not only had their pound of flesh, but, speaking of the bulk of them, they wrung every possible drop of blood out of the unfortunate consumers as well. They have thereby done more to injure the cause of Protection in Australia than anything that has ever been brought against Protection by those opposed to that fiscal policy. That line of action by Australian manufacturers has gone further to open the eyes of the Australian public to some of the evils of the system than anything else that has happened. If the local manufacturers had done the fair thing by the consumers of Australia, as they could well have afforded to do and still have secured handsome profits, I should have been one of the first to say, "You have vindicated yourselves in circumstances of some little temptation and I am prepared to trust you to a greater extent than ever in the future." I say now, however, that I am not prepared to trust them to give a fair deal to the consumers of Australia without some method of enabling the consumers to protect themselves. When we look around the shops at the present time and notice the cost of woollen goods, blankets, flannels, and tweeds, we find that the prices asked for them are more than double what they were in pre-war times. We begin to wonder how it is that this is tolerated by the Australian public. The cost of the raw material of the industry is down lower than it was in pre-war times, and yet to-day the public are paying higher prices than they did before the war for the products of these factories. I say without hesitation that in some cases at any rate there is more profiteering going on in Australia to-day than there was during the war period.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Does the honorable member say that the price of the raw material is down below the pre-war price?

Mr. Fowler.

Mr. FOWLER.—Yes. The price at which wool can be secured to-day is lower than it was for several years before the war.

Mr. HILL.—It is the same with almost every primary product.

Mr. FOWLER.—The price of the raw material is lower than it was before the war, whilst the price of the manufactured article is more than double what it was before the war. Why? The cost of labour has slightly increased; but the volume to which I have already referred shows that the cost of labour plays relatively a very small part in the production of an industry such as this, where the greater part of the work is done by machinery. In this case it amounts at the most to about 30 per cent. Thus, if the labour costs were doubled, that would not by any means justify the doubling of the price of the manufactured article to the consumers of Australia.

While I am inclined to be reminiscent on this topic, I would remind honorable members that I think I was the first to attempt, in relation to the protection of Australian industries, to give some protection to the consumer. When the Australian Industries Encouragement Bill was before the House, a good many years ago, I endeavoured to secure the insertion of clauses which would make the protection of the Australian manufacturer consequent upon fair wages being paid in the industry, and fair prices charged to the consumer. That attempt, owing to our constitutional limitations, failed. I want, however, to suggest to the Minister a method by which that same object could be secured under this Tariff. I suggest that there could be established a body that would keep a watch on the prices of Australian-made goods in relation to prices for the same classes of goods in Great Britain and America—the two countries from which our competition principally comes—and that when that body reported that prices in Australia did not bear a fair relation to the cost of goods being sold in those two countries, the protection afforded should automatically come down. In that way we would secure the protection of the consumer.

Mr. GREENE.—I have promised to introduce a Bill somewhat along those lines.

Mr. FOWLER.—If the honorable gentleman has made that promise, I am not so much concerned as to whether or not the protection is high—

Mr. GREENE.—I have definitely promised the House to bring in a Bill, not to do exactly what the honorable member suggests, but to do something, at all events, on the lines mentioned by him.

Mr. FOWLER.—I am not concerned with the details, as long as the Minister accepts the principle.

Mr. GREENE.—I have already promised to do so.

Mr. FOWLER.—I know that the Minister has indicated his intention to move in some way or other to protect the consumer, but I am not aware that he has given any particular indication of how he is going to achieve that object. I am suggesting a method, because, as has been said from all sides during this debate, the old-fashioned natural competition is almost at an end in all parts of the world. There are Combines that are international in their operation, and there is no doubt that the Australian interests in regard to production and, at all events, wholesale distribution, have learned their lesson, in that respect, from the outside world.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—They are in harmony with economic evolution.

Mr. FOWLER.—We want economic evolution to evolve on sound lines, and, where necessary, we should give it a little fillip. I am at one with the honorable member in that regard. If the consumer is to be protected in some adequate way, then I am not so much concerned as to whether or not the protection is high. I think, however, we ought to make the Tariff wall against the Mother Country a little lower than we are doing. It is of no advantage to make the wall so high that in most cases neither the Mother Country nor any other country can get over it, and then to add an ornamental coping and describe that as a preference to the Mother Country. That is in the nature of what we are doing in this Tariff. Taking into consideration the natural protection that Australia on account of her isolated position enjoys, and is likely to enjoy for all time, a very moderate duty is ample for any industry that has a chance to struggle along.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—If that is the case, why do you want a Tariff at all?

Mr. FOWLER.—I do not want a Tariff in the sense that the honorable member suggests. We have before us a Tariff schedule that we are trying to put into shape, and if the honorable member and I were free to carry out our ideas, the alterations might be more drastic than the Committee would be inclined to adopt. I want again to suggest that if we are going to give preference to the Mother Country, it should be something more genuine than is proposed in this Tariff. In the majority of cases the duty is practically prohibitive, so that no preference whatever is given. Now that the objectionable conditions of labour in Great Britain upon which Protectionists used to dilate have disappeared, we might very well be far more generous than we are. I recognise, however, that it is useless for me to attempt to move in that direction, and just as useless to speak; but I am glad to have from the Minister the promise that he proposes to give the consumer some little consideration in connexion with this Tariff, and with that promise for the meantime I shall have to be content.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [6.3].—I should like to deal very briefly with the closing observations made by the honorable member who has just resumed his seat (Mr. Fowler) as to the inadequacy of the preference we are giving to Great Britain. If there is one thing in regard to which I feel strongly it is that where we are giving preference it should be given as far as possible to Britain. I propose to show to what extent the preferential provisions of the Tariff in regard to woollen goods have thrown into British hands the great bulk of our import trade. Taking the figures for last year, I find that our total importations of woollen-piece goods were valued at £3,437,230, and that of those imports no less than £3,331,081 worth came from the United Kingdom. That is to say, out of a total importation of practically three and a half million pounds worth of woollen-piece goods, only £106,000 worth came from countries other than the United Kingdom. These figures, I think, are sufficient proof—if proof were needed—that the preference given under the Tariff to British goods is effective.

In regard to this great industry, which of all others should be native to Australia, I believe we should be able practically to cut off our importations and to become exporters of woollen-piece goods. I hope to see that position established; I hope that we shall be able, not only to cease importing woollen-piece goods, but to become exporters.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The honorable gentleman is very optimistic.

Mr. GREENE.—I believe that to be a possibility, nay, a probability, of the future. I am very hopeful that the rates which we are providing in this Tariff will be effective in that direction. A great deal has been said about the profits that were made by the woollen mills during the war. Those who have followed the history of our mills, and have tried to get down to the true reasons for those profits, will have found that at that time the mills were practically not manufacturing for civilian purposes. Practically the whole of their machinery and energies were at that particular period thrown into the making of khaki cloth and flannels required for war purposes. They had been accustomed to working on a definite percentage on turnover which gave them a very moderate profit. The balance-sheets of the various woollen mills operating in the Commonwealth show that before the war their profits were very moderate. They set to work, no doubt, to make their contracts with the Defence Department on the basis of profit in relation to turnover to which they had been accustomed. I do not believe the woollen manufacturers themselves realized at the time that by throwing, as they practically did, the whole of their energies into the production of one class of goods they would make more money than they had done before on the same basis of profit in relation to turnover. Instead of having every day to change their looms from one class of manufacture to another, or to spin different classes of yarns for different classes of manufactures, they were able to keep the whole of their plant running as one unit concentrated on the turning out of one particular class of material. I do not think they realized that in doing this, working their mills twenty-four hours a day instead of eight, they would make very much more money than they had done before on the same basis of profit in relation to turnover. I cannot conceive

of a more magnificent example of the benefits of massed production than those figures show. You cannot get the best results from the manufacture of any particular class of goods unless by massed production.

Mr. PROWSE.—That is no argument for this Tariff.

Mr. GREENE.—To my mind, it is a very substantial argument in its favour. If we can so build up our industries that they specialize and concentrate, instead of turning from one thing to another, we shall be able to get our goods at a very much lower price, and the manufacturers will be able to make more money. That is an ordinary business proposition which the honorable member will not dispute.

Has any honorable member given consideration to the history of the woollen industry in Australia? It was, I believe, about the first manufacturing industry to be established here. Its history goes back to 1801. The first woollen mill in Victoria was started in 1867, but the industry has been of very slow growth. In 1908 there were in the Commonwealth exactly as many mills manufacturing woollen goods as there were when the war broke out in 1914. There had been no expansion. There had been a little growth in their output, and a slight increase in the number of hands employed; but there they were—twenty-two factories in 1908 and twenty-two in 1914. For that lack of growth there must have been a reason.

Mr. FOWLER.—In Victoria, when the duties were highest, the industry was at its lowest ebb.

Mr. GREENE.—I am not arguing on that point; I am saying that if this was such a magnificent industry for the reaping of profits, surely there would have been found many people falling over each other to invest in it. But the facts are against that view; they show that during this long period of our history the growth of the woollen industry has been practically negligible. During the war—

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Before the war the profits were not unreasonable.

Mr. GREENE.—They were not; they were not only not unreasonable, but, having regard to the risks of any industrial enterprise, they were less than in most. During the war, it is true, the woollen mills made large profits, and the public

got very little material, indeed, from the mills. As I have already explained, the whole of the energies of the mills were devoted to turning out goods for the Defence Department, and for civilian purposes the deliveries were very small. I remember that during the somewhat chequered period, when I presided over the Department which controlled prices, it was over and over again suggested that we should endeavour to control the prices of Australian woollen goods. But when we came to investigate the position, we found that practically all the woollen piece goods that were being used by the public were imported; there was scarcely any Australian stuff on the market because of this concentration of the mills on military work. If we had tried to follow the comparatively small portion of the Australian production through the various ramifications of the trade, we should have lost it. What really was the cause, and what I believe is very largely the cause of the tremendous prices being charged to the public for woollen clothing, and woollen garments generally, is that we are still getting a large amount of material from abroad. The retailer, if he has a certain amount of Australian stuff, has got it at a cheaper rate than that at which he gets the imported, for the local manufacturer does not get anything approaching the price that the importer pays for the stuff from overseas. It is a fact that this local material gets mixed up with the imported material, and, I believe, is very often sold as imported by the tailor. The public are not getting the benefit of the fact that we are turning out a large percentage, at all events, of Australian goods. If we can build up this industry so that we may get practically the whole of our consumption from Australian mills, we shall soon see an alteration in that state of affairs. So long as we have the stream of imported material coming in, we shall never get the full benefit of our local manufacture. If I accepted the amendment, the only result would be to make it easier to import and more difficult to manufacture, and to put the day of benefit to the consumer so much further away—to put off the day when the Australian mills will turn out the whole of our requirements. I feel very strongly that, if we would only seize it, we have a unique oppor-

tunity now to send this industry bounding along the road of prosperity; I mean prosperity from the point of view of production. I wish to see this industry develop in Australia; I wish to see Australia become an exporter, not so much of raw wool as of manufactured woollen goods; and I believe that the day is not far distant, if we will only take our courage in both hands, when that object may be gained. As I have stated, the whole history of the industry is such that one feels that unless we are prepared to give a fair measure of protection, increased protection if honorable members like, on that which we had before the war, we cannot hope for any better results in the future than in the past.

Mr. FOWLER.—Surely we do not need practically 60 per cent. of protection?

Mr. GREENE.—I deny altogether that we have anything approaching that protection.

Mr. FOWLER.—I can prove it absolutely—up to the hilt.

Mr. GREENE.—I deny it altogether.

Mr. FOWLER.—Under this Tariff the protection is practically 60 per cent.

Mr. GREENE.—And the reason for my denial is a very simple one. If the honorable member will take into consideration the cost of moving the goods from one part of Australia to another, and set it against the cost of transit to and from Britain, he will find that there is precious little difference between them.

Mr. FOWLER.—Have not imported goods to be moved about Australia in the same way?

Mr. GREENE.—I am talking of wholesale transactions, and I repeat that if the honorable member will do as I suggest he will find that there is precious little difference; indeed, I know a great number of cases in which the Australian cost is the greater. I have often heard of the natural protection of which the honorable member speaks, but if he examines the position with an unprejudiced mind, he will find that that protection practically disappears in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred.

I do not know that it is necessary for me to say any more at this stage, except that I hope the amendment will not be accepted. I do not propose to raise the British preference rate over the 1914

Tariff, but leave it exactly where it has been for seven years. I think that the proposal in the Tariff is a very moderate one in the circumstances, and I ask the Committee to adopt it.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [6.19].—I wish to give notice that I intend to move a further amendment with the object of raising the duties to 35 per cent., 45 per cent., and 50 per cent. Australia is the greatest wool-producing country in the world. I do not say that as a Labour man, but merely repeat what is said by my honorable friends opposite, and by the press which supports them. By those honorable members, and by that press, we are told of the marvellous wealth that is represented by our wool production. I can well remember the time when we were told that the only use for our wool was to export it, and that we must have Free Trade in other commodities, so that ships might bring the latter here at substantial profit, and thus be able to take our wool back to the Old Country at lower freights. That was the argument we used to hear thirty or forty years ago. I have heard all sorts of statements as to the probable effect of high Protection upon the workers of Australia. I do not think the workers pay the tax at all, so it is of no use to talk to me about the condition of the poor worker under Protection. If there were no taxes they would get so much less in wages. Our taxation, we are told, is about £11 per head, representing about £44 per year for the average working man and his family. I am satisfied that if this taxation were lifted he would get £44 less in wages every year. What occurred during the war in the woollen industry? You could go into any of the warehouses in Melbourne and buy material, such as is in the sample I am now exhibiting, very fine tweed, though, perhaps not quite so good in some respects as the best West of England tweed. If I had my way I would not allow one yard of tweed to be imported. I would insist upon the people of this country wearing the Australian material. During the war the warehousemen in this country sold every yard of this material as imported cloth. I have no consideration for the manufacturers at all, although large sums of money have been spent in my division

upon the erection of establishments, equipped with all the necessary machinery for manufacturing the raw material into the finished product. My only concern is for the men and women who work in such establishments, and who sent me here. Among the manufacturers I have many friends, and, of course, speaking personally, I would not like to see them ruined, but for manufacturers generally, I have no concern whatever. Australia produces immense quantities of raw product in the form of wool, and if we have not the power of organization to handle it and develop our industries as is done in other countries of the world, then we must be unworthy of our trust.

Mr. PROWSE.—I agree, but we ought to develop our industries without artificial aids.

Mr. MATHEWS.—We are told that we do not want artificial help in the building up of our industries. The time for high prices has passed, and so we should do our utmost to assist in the establishment of all those new companies which, we understand, are about to be launched for the development of the textile industry in Australia. In a statement issued by the Bureau of Commerce and Industry recently there is a list of twenty-two woollen textile manufacturing companies that have been registered in Australia since the beginning of 1920. I should like to place that list on record. It is as follows:—

	Capital. £
Apsley Mills, Richmond (Vic.) ..	25,000
Excelsior Knitting Mills (Melb.) ..	20,000
Leicester Knitting Mills, Fitzroy (Vic.) ..	20,000
Stawell Mills (Vic.) ..	100,000
Belge-Austral Mills (Sydney) ..	20,000
Sinclair Weaving Mills (Vic.) ..	20,000
Cosmos Knitting Mills (N.S.W.) ..	20,000
Alexandra Mills (N.S.W.) ..	50,000
Austral Knitting Mills (N.S.W.) ..	75,000
Tillam and Boehme (Sydney) ..	150,000
Riverina Co. (N.S.W.) ..	50,000
Metropolitan Knitting Mills (Sydney)	130,000
Sydney Woollen Mills (capital increased to) ..	375,000
J. Vears & Co., Sydney (capital increased to) ..	750,000
Torrensides Mills (S.A.) ..	50,000
Golds Hosiery Mills (Sydney) ..	300,000
Kelsall and Kemp (Tasmania) ..	100,000
Australian Weaving Co. (Vic.) ..	100,000
Lincoln Knitting Mills (Vic.) ..	500,000
Lincoln Spinning Mills (Melb.) ..	500,000
Geelong R. S. & S. Co-operative Woollen Co. (Vic.) ..	100,000
Austral Woollen Co. Ltd. (Melb.) ..	250,000

The following companies registered since 1920 are in course of formation:—

	Capital. £
Daylesford (Vic.)	100,000
Sydney Textiles (N.S.W.)	150,000
Wangaratta (Vic.)	100,000
Hamilton (Vic.)	75,000
Shepparton (Vic.)	20,000
Beechworth (Vic.)	20,000
Port Phillip Combining and Spinning Mills (Vic.)	250,000
Tasmanian Woollen and Worsted Co.	250,000
Western Spinning Co. Ltd., Orange (N.S.W.)	200,000
Textile Workers Union, Parramatta (N.S.W.)	200,000
Sale Woollen Mills (Vic.)	100,000

This does not take into account the firm registrations or the rapidly increasing knitting concerns in the various States. It is evident that the people who are associated with these companies can see an opportunity presented for the development of the industry in Australia, but apparently the Government cannot see it. In the beginning of 1918 I introduced to the Minister for Repatriation (Senator E. D. Millen) a deputation asking the Government to spend £5,000,000 in the woollen industry for repatriation purposes. If the Government had done that, they would have been in a better position to-day to repatriate our returned soldiers. The argument used at the time was that the woollen industry did not offer employment to a large number of men.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 8 p.m.

Mr. MATHEWS.—If every country town in Australia had a woollen mill turning out some form of woollen goods, it would add to the stability of these inland towns, and considerably ease the labour question. I am asked why, with all our natural protection, we cannot do this or that. When recently I had the pleasure of visiting the Yarra Falls Spinning Mills, I took the opportunity of asking the manager whether he was doing anything in the direction of working up the by-products of the woollen industry, and mentioned the production of lanoline. He said, "No; for several reasons." First of all, he showed me a large pit, into which was drained all material that would at some future time be absorbed in the manufacture of lanoline, but he told me that it would not pay an establishment like his to introduce the necessary machi-

nery for the treatment of these by-products. He said that it would take all the different establishments combined to do so. This is one of the reasons why competitors on the other side of the world can hold their own against us. If we could only treat the whole of the by-products associated with the woollen industry, our position would be considerably improved; but before we could hope to treat these by-products effectively we would need to increase our manufacture of wool into piece goods at least tenfold. However, in the near future, I hope that everything associated with the sheep, except, perhaps, its baa, will be used up by our manufacturers. Those countries which undertake the production of woollen goods to the fullest extent lose very little of the by-products of the industry. To illustrate my argument, let me refer to the operations carried on by the Maize Products Limited in Melbourne. The company loses nothing in the treatment of maize. It applies such a high degree of perfection to its manufacture that it has even established a coopering branch for turning out its own barrels. If we could so manage our woollen industry that the by-products could be put to use, we certainly would be doing something beneficial to Australia.

I do not intend to protract this discussion. We ought to make up our minds as to whether we are Protectionists or not, whether we intend the duties we impose to give us an article produced in Australia or an imported article, or whether we are merely seeking to establish a revenue Tariff. I have been reminded in this House on several occasions, "Do not forget we want revenue." I want no revenue through the Customs. No Protective duty is effective if it produces revenue.

With the knowledge I have of the woollen trade, I feel that we have arrived at a stage in Australia when we ought to produce a commodity fit for any one to wear, and at a price cheaper than that at which it can be imported.

Mr. GREGORY.—Then we do not require the duty.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member will persist in that line of talk. I admit that during the war the duty on woollen goods was inoperative, and that

even to-day it is to a certain degree in-operative. But the honorable member knows as well as I do the peculiar condition of all the industries in the country which is our greatest competitor in respect to the manufacture of woollen goods. Unfortunately, it seems that the coal miners of Great Britain are beaten; and if their wages come down, then wages will come down right throughout Great Britain; and the same conditions will follow in Australia. As a matter of fact, the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) is anxious to see the cost of living kept down, so that wages may be reduced.

Mr. GREGORY.—Yes; in order that we may carry on our industries.

Mr. MATHEWS.—If we lower the cost of living we lower the wages of the workers. The honorable member has said most emphatically during this debate that he was anxious to avoid adding to the cost of living in Australia, because he realized that wages must come down.

Mr. GREGORY.—Otherwise our primary industries could not be carried on.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member is anxious to see wages reduced so that certain advantages may not be lost to some industries.

Mr. GREGORY.—The mining industry, for instance.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Surely the honorable member has an instance in the metal mines. Every one will know it within six months; perhaps within three months.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Before the workers of Australia allow their wages to be cut down by one cent. I hope there will be an industrial upheaval unparalleled in the history of this country, because it will be goodbye to existing organizations the moment a start is made to reduce wages. There are thousands of men in the Labour movement* hoping for this, not for the reason advanced by honorable members opposite, but because they believe that it will bring about a crisis that will upset our present economic system.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Rubbish!

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—That is what I call bunkum.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Honorable members are very innocent. We have honorable members here who wish to see

costs kept down so that wages may be cut down. It is the old Free Trade bait at which the workers of Great Britain bit, and by which they were caught. What is the position of the workers in the Old Country under Free Trade, especially in the woollen industry and in agriculture? There are people in England—we know them as the submerged tenth—who are poorer than any other people in the world.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member would not think it fair if I said that his action is taken merely for the purpose of increasing the profits of the manufacturers.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I have been told that such is the case. I admit that the effect of these duties will be to increase the profits of the manufacturers unless the Parliament or the people of Australia prevent it. It is up to this Parliament to prevent it or to the people of Australia to demand that this Parliament shall prevent it. If Parliament has not the power to do it, then the people must give it the power.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—If the manufacturers are to make profits, it would be much better for the profits to go to Australian manufacturers rather than to foreigners.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Yes, and we can tax the Australian manufacturers out of all the abnormal profits they are making. If I had the opportunity I would do so.

Mr. BRENNAN.—Is there no submerged tenth in New York or Berlin?

Mr. MATHEWS.—Of course, there is. There is no virtue in Protection as protection, just the same as there is no virtue in Free Trade as free trade. I am not a Protectionist because I am a Labour man, but I am a Labour man because I know that the workers are the only persons in a country worth considering, and I use a Protective policy as a means to an end. No halo surrounds the word Protection as far as I am concerned. I repeat that we can tax the manufacturers of Australia if we choose to do so, but, unfortunately, honorable members opposite are not too keen on taxing the big profits of either the manufacturers or the importers.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—That is not fair.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Honorable members opposite know that importers have made big fortunes, and they know that while we can tax the local manufacturer, we cannot tax the importer. I intend to move an increase to this duty, because I am satisfied that the one great chance Australia has to pay its enormous debt is to utilize its great natural product, wool, by establishing factories for its treatment in all its phases. Unless something is done to pay our debt, there will be a crisis, and it is because I want to avoid that crisis that I suggest a method by which we can do so. Every town in Australia should run a woollen mill, not only to supply local requirements, but also for the purpose of exporting woollen piece goods, and also for the treatment of the by-products of the industry, and this can be done when we organize the industry properly.

Mr. WIENHOLT (Moreton) [8.13].—I have no intention of going over the ground that has already been traversed by other honorable members, nor am I egotistical enough to think that anything one could say would affect a single vote; but I wish to take the opportunity upon the proposed duty on such an essential commodity as woollen goods of making my position quite plain. I dissociate myself altogether from the Protection mad policy that is now being carried into effect in this Committee. The Minister (Mr. Greene) has already earned for himself the reputation of being an Australian McKinley, but if I may be so bold as to say it, and, without offence, I think that by the time we have gone through the Tariff we shall be able more properly to compare him with the Chinese Emperor, Shih Hwang Ti, who built the famous Wall of China to block his Empire out from the rest of the world. There are two considerations in particular which appeal to me. Both the last speakers, who used the words "Australian genius and Australian industry," and the honorable member for Perth (Mr. Fowler), with whose speech I am very much in accord, made plain that we have not only the finest wool, but also, I believe, in the true Australian worker, the quickest and most intelligent worker in the world, with the possible exception of the American, about whom I cannot speak. Having these two advantages, every claim for a big protective duty

is nothing short of a vote of want of confidence in the Australian raw material, the Australian manufacturer, and the Australian worker. When dealing with these already big, and, in many cases, prohibitive duties, we should have regard particularly to the man with a family. Every tax placed upon him under the Tariff may be increased threefold, fivefold, or tenfold, according to the number of his children. He is the one person above all others for whom we should have regard. When I see the Committee going "protection mad" I have at least this consoling thought that, just as the pendulum is swinging to one side now, so surely will it swing to the other side later. I am pleased that a motion for the reduction of the duty has been submitted by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory). In supporting the amendment we wish no ill to the woollen manufactories, far from it. There is one mill in my own electorate, but that fact does not prevent me from voting on these duties according to my principles. I hope the amendment will be well supported, and that we shall have a fair chance of reducing the duty to a reasonable rate.

Mr. LISTER (Coörio) [8.19].—I listened with very great interest to the remarks made by the honorable member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews). Although I take exception to some of his statements, I think that on the whole he has contributed to the debate something of value, and has given a lead which the Committee should follow. He stated that he was interested only in the workers engaged in the woollen industry, and had no particular concern in the persons who have invested their money in it. A statement of that kind is extremely unfortunate, because if ever there was a time when the co-operation of capital and labour was necessary it is now. We cannot develop the industries of the Commonwealth without the aid of capital, and I was surprised at the remarks of the honorable member, because later he made a special plea for an increase in the Tariff in order to assist the various companies who have recently started manufacturing in Australia. I recognise as much as does any other honorable member the necessity for developing the woollen industry, and I intend to support

the amendment to be proposed by the honorable member for Melbourne Ports, because I recognise that if the industry is to progress it must receive even greater protection than it has had in the past. The Minister (Mr. Greene) made that clear when he emphasized the stagnation in the industry over a period of years just prior to the war, and he rightly argued that if woollen manufacture were the gold mine which some people believe it to be, much more money would have been invested in it, and there would not have been the cry that has been heard so often lately that the industry is at a standstill, and must be further encouraged. Only a little time ago we had evidence of the interest that other countries are taking in the woollen industry, and we read of visitors from Japan purchasing some of the best stud sheep that money could procure. That action indicates to me that before long we shall have an active competitor in a people whose workers are employed at wages and under conditions very much below those ruling in Australia. For that reason we would be justified in giving further protection to an industry which means so much to the Commonwealth. Some honorable members have taken exception to the proposed duty because they allege that some manufacturers have been making inordinate profits. The Minister in his remarks effectively disposed of that argument. During the year 1914 the percentage of profits to turnover in the woollen industry was 12.93 per cent., which no honorable member will say was exorbitant. Other honorable members have complained of the so-called greed shown by the manufacturers during the war period. Yet, during the years 1915-16-17, the percentage of profit to turnover increased to only 17.59 per cent. Having regard to the fact that in order to get the big turnover the mills were running three shifts, and that the overhead charges were correspondingly decreased, and that the machinery was deteriorating rapidly and could only be replaced at very high prices, that was not an excessive profit. In regard to the cost of manufacture, I know of material manufactured in the mills at Geelong and sold at a cost price of 11s. per yard, but re-sold to the retailer at from 25s. to 27s.

Mr. Lister.

per yard. The increase appears to be very great, but I am told on most reliable authority that if the manufacturers themselves were to undertake the distribution of their product they could not place it on the market at the price at which the wholesalers are selling it to-day.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—That is a nice fairy tale.

Mr. LISTER.—I am told that it is true.

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE.—The honorable member must be "soft" to believe that.

Mr. LISTER.—No stretch of the imagination is required to believe that statement when one realizes that the manufacturers deal with very few lines. If they had to send their travellers all over the Commonwealth to handle only their products, the cost of distribution would be greater than it is through the medium of the wholesale houses. One explanation of the profits made during the war period was that owing to the demand for war material the products of the mills were standardized. The mills were turning out only one quality and size of blanket, and that enabled them to produce larger quantities, and naturally make greater profits.

Mr. GREGORY.—Why did they double their price?

Mr. LISTER.—They entered into a contract with the Defence Department at a price that was considered fair. Instead of turning out blankets of thirty-five different grades and sizes, which naturally would have necessitated a considerable amount of extra work, they concentrated on one standard line. Then, although forty qualities and sizes of flannels were made before the war, only one was made during the war. It is this that probably explains the profits made by the manufacturers.

Mr. McGRATH.—Should they not under those circumstances have sold more cheaply?

Mr. LISTER.—Their prices, as has been stated by several speakers, were considerably below those at which similar articles could be obtained anywhere else. They were prices at which the Defence Department were very pleased to get their supplies. Let me read a letter headed "A warning to Australia," which is printed on page 184 of

the *Australian Tariff Hand-book*, 1919. It reads—

In the January, 1909, issue of the *Textile World*, of America, appeared a letter from the Montreal Woollen Mill Company of Canada, explaining the difficulty in which the company found itself. The letter was dated 23rd December, 1908, and, addressed to the editor of the journal, read:—"Dear Sir,— . . . We have been in business for the past thirty years, and have always paid good interest on the capital invested until the last four years. Since the present Liberal party came into power they have lowered the duty from 50 to 23½ per cent., and have practically annihilated the woollen industry. During their stay in power they have, through their Free Trade policy, been the cause of 75 per cent. of the woollen mills closing, and if they stay in power much longer there will be none left, and the once biggest Canadian industry will be no more. We have during the past four years lost money, but have been hanging on, expecting a change in the Government which did not come, and we have now decided to liquidate our plant while we can pay 100 cents on the dollar. Do you know what second-hand woollen machinery is in the States? If same is low enough, we may be induced to move our machinery, and go over, providing we could secure a good location at a reasonable figure.

THE MONTREAL WOOLLEN MILL CO."

I should not like the Australian woollen industry to be in a position of jeopardy similar to the Montreal Company, and when the honorable member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews) moves to increase these duties I shall support his amendment.

Mr. ROBERT COOK (Indi) [8.35].—It seems to me that the woollen industry is one of our chief industries, and one that we should do our best to develop. That the employees in it have not been giving a fair deal, and that the manufacturers have been charging too much for their goods, is not a reason for withholding support from it. We know that the manufacturers did not play the game during the war, and that they are not playing it now. We know, too, that the employees have obtained practically what they asked for from Wages Boards and the Arbitration Court, and that they have not been playing the game. As a result of the slowing-down policy and profiteering, many of our industries are likely to break down in the near future. The harmless public is being penalized by two profiteering gangs: the employees do not care what wages are, so long as these

are continually ascending, and the manufacturers merely pass on any increases granted by Wages Board or the Arbitration Court, with the addition of, perhaps, 10 per cent., and then ask for further assistance under the Tariff. These two profiteering gangs should be brought to their knees. But the circumstances which now exist should not prevent us from doing what is reasonable to develop the woollen industry. If properly developed, it would be worth upwards of £100,000,000 to Australia. We manufacture about 3 per cent. of our yearly wool product.

Mr. GREENE.—No; we utilize for manufacturing in Australia only 2½ per cent. of our production of wool.

Mr. BOWDEN.—We manufacture 50 per cent. of our requirements.

Mr. ROBERT COOK.—No; nothing like that; only 12 per cent. of our requirements. Australia produces one-fourth of the world's wool and between 62 and 64 per cent. of the world's fine wool, and every member should do what he can to put the woollen industry on a proper footing. We have the climate necessary for the manufacture of woollens, and the Bureau of Science and Industry has been instrumental in starting about thirty-three companies, with a registered capital of about £3,600,000. Many of these companies, like two in my district, are merely waiting for machinery. It is in this matter of machinery that the Government can assist the woollen industry. We wish to know how we can best get the machinery that we need. We have every reason to go ahead with the development of this industry. The time has arrived when the electric power which may be generated by some of our rivers must be taken into consideration. I understand that an application has been made for a lease in connexion with a hydro-electric power scheme on the Kiewa River. That scheme will provide power for the greater part of Victoria, and the Morwell scheme will furnish the balance. Other States are about to develop their water-power in the same way, and, therefore, it seems to me that we can proceed to establish the woollen industry in our midst with the greatest degree of confidence. I am inclined to grant a preference of 5 per cent.

to the woollen goods of the United Kingdom, in addition to the Minister's proposal, but I do not care what duty is imposed upon those coming from foreign countries.

Mr. GREENE.—In this schedule we have given Britain a preference of 15 per cent.

Mr. ROBERT COOK.—One honorable member has referred to a nation which is paying only half-a-crown per day to its labourers. We cannot possibly hope to compete with such nations; and for that reason I am prepared to impose a very substantial duty indeed upon goods entering the Commonwealth under the general Tariff.

Mr. McGRATH (Ballarat) [8.42].—During this debate I have been struck by the remarkable attitude which has been adopted by certain members of the Country party, and particularly by the honorable member for Indi (Mr. Robert Cook), who talked about the two gangs of profiteers—the manufacturers and the workers. You, sir, will remember—as, indeed, all of us do—the time when the workers of this country were obliged to resort to the weapon of the strike in order to enforce their demands for better wages or for improved industrial conditions. But after years of agitation, Arbitration Courts and Wages Boards were substituted for that weapon, with the result that to-day every concession that is obtained by the wage-earner is obtained by constitutional methods. In the woollen industry there is a Wages Board consisting of three members, of whom the chairman is usually a representative of the employers. Yet the honorable member for Indi had the temerity to stand up here and impute that the workers are a gang of profiteers. Need I remind him that at the last election it was the workers who put him where he is to-day, by giving him their second preference votes.

Mr. ROBERT COOK.—Are they not going slow?

Mr. McGRATH.—A greater slander than that the workers, of Australia are guilty of going slow was never uttered by an honorable member. The Assistant Minister for Defence (Sir Granville Ryrie) has recently been amongst the Egyptian workmen, and he knows, as well as anybody, that one Australian

workman does more in three days than the workman of any other country does in a week.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—That is not true.

Mr. McGRATH.—The Australian workers have adopted constitutional methods to obtain redress of their grievances, and because they are now getting a decent wage the honorable member for Indi has the temerity to term them a gang of profiteers. I am ashamed to think that any honorable member would utter such a slanderous statement upon the workers of Australia.

Mr. MATHEWS.—No doubt there is trouble in the bacon factory.

Mr. McGRATH.—Probably that is the explanation. The honorable member for Indi may be perturbed about his profits. Did he ever hear of a workman's will being sworn for probate purposes at £1,000? Certainly not. The worker gets only a bare living out of his wages. It is men like the honorable member and others of his class who can die worth £10,000, or £20,000, or £30,000. I hold no brief for the manufacturing class of this country. I am a Protectionist, but I know only too well how they acted throughout the war period. They made immense profits.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—So did members of the importing class.

Mr. McGRATH.—Both the importing and the manufacturing classes took advantage of war conditions to exploit the people. They talked about the conservation of human life and about equality of sacrifice, but whilst our men were away in the fighting line they were intent upon increasing their bank balances. Nevertheless I shall vote for the increased duty which is proposed. If the war has taught us anything, it is that Australia ought to be a manufacturing country. During the war period we were scarcely able to import a single thing, and we demonstrated our capacity to manufacture articles which we had previously imported better than can any other country in the world. There were no soldiers overseas as well clad as were our Australian soldiers, who were equipped throughout with articles produced in the Commonwealth. The boots supplied to our troops were infinitely better than were the boots supplied

to the troops of any other nation. There is no reason why we cannot produce sufficient for all the woollen requirements of our own people. I admit that if we impose a very heavy duty upon woollens we shall not be able to supply our people with cheap articles. But that is the fault of the people themselves. We have repeatedly asked them to clothe this Parliament with the constitutional power to enable it to establish more Government woollen mills than those at Geelong. As a returned soldier I was able to purchase a suit length of cloth from those mills for 26s., and if we possessed the requisite constitutional power every other individual in Australia could be supplied at the same price. The honorable member for Corio (Mr. Lister) has said that it costs another 12s. per yard to distribute that cloth. Of course it does if we play into the hands of the Flinders-lane merchants.

Mr. GREGORY.—If we do what the honorable member suggests we might get into a similar position to that which is occupied by the Cockatoo Island Dockyard.

Mr. McGRATH.—The administration of the Cockatoo Island Dockyard is still under investigation. But I can quite imagine any State or Commonwealth enterprise being made a failure if Ministers wish to bring discredit upon it. We established the Commonwealth Bank, but fortunately Ministers were sympathetic towards that institution, with the result that it has proved a big success, and that it upheld the credit of this country during five years of war. Similarly our Commonwealth Woollen Mills were established by Ministers who desired to make them a success. It is remarkable that, notwithstanding that we have Ministers side by side with vested interests which desire the failure of the Commonwealth Woollen Mill, the latter has been a gigantic success. And if such is the case with respect to one establishment in Geelong, the same should be applicable to others if established throughout the Commonwealth.

Mr. LISTER.—If they were equally capably managed.

Mr. McGRATH.—If private enterprise can secure capable managers, and if the Commonwealth can secure a capable manager at Geelong, the same should be

possible in regard to the establishment of Commonwealth mills all over Australia. All that is required is a man of sympathy, a man with a belief in the venture, one who is as capable of giving a fair deal to the employees as to the Commonwealth. It would be no satisfaction to me to vote for a reduction of duties in order that certain importers might become a little more wealthy by bringing woollen goods into this country. I would prefer to see Australian manufacturers getting richer rather than manufacturers outside of Australia, together with a few importers in our various capital cities. If there must be a monopoly, let the monopoly be an Australian one, where Australians will benefit, and where, in any case, they will be more easily got at and controlled by the Commonwealth authorities. Honorable members on this side are consistent. We candidly admit that Protection is no cure for Australia's industrial evils. I have no doubt but that it will increase the cost of living. But, at any rate, I am not like members of the Country party, who go for Protection upon Australian-grown sugar, bananas, onions, citrus fruits, and currants and raisins, while upon all those things which do not directly concern their non-manufacturing districts they are "true blue" Free Traders.

Mr. ROBERT COOK.—I am glad I am not like the honorable member, at any rate.

Mr. McGRATH.—And I am very glad I am not like the honorable member for Indi (Mr. Robert Cook). I look upon myself as a better Australian than the honorable member, who spent the whole of his time in addressing the Committee to-night in slandering Australians; who said that they were not giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay; who imputed that they were incompetent workmen.

Mr. ROBERT COOK.—Twenty per cent. of them.

Mr. McGRATH.—And that they were not able to hold their own with working men in other parts of the world. I am surprised that the honorable member should have displayed such disloyalty to his own country. I have faith in Australia. We have great opportunities because we have the means to produce almost everything we require. Yet we hear the honorable member for Indi, and others like him, decrying the Australian

workman, talking about the go-slow policy, and direct action, and Bolsheviks. Well-known English firms, such as Cadbury's, come out here and establish their factories. Would they do so if they believed that our workmen were of the type indicated by the honorable member for Indi? The time is not far distant when Australia will not only be manufacturing all her own requirements of woollens, but will be exporting them to various parts of the world. It is with that in mind that I intend to support the Government's proposals.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER (Wakefield) [8.55].—I intend to vote in support of the proposals of the Minister (Mr. Greene). The Tariff is, in effect, the Tariff introduced—so far as the matter of preference to the United Kingdom is concerned—in 1914. On the basis of the Tariff as it exists to-day, Australia is likely to be benefited by the establishment of branch factories of well-known British firms. One reason why I intend to vote as I have indicated is because I believe that the most effective method by which we can secure reasonable prices for the consumer is by competition—that competition being participated in by some of the most efficient firms in the world. I give my support to the Minister's proposals, also, because the Committee has been assured of the intention of the Government to prevent exploitation by manufacturers, so far as may be humanly possible.

Mr. BOWDEN.—As far as may be constitutionally possible.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I thank the honorable member. That is so. I believe in being fair all round. Some honorable members opposite have referred to the Commonwealth mills, and to the wonderful way in which they can produce remarkably cheap materials. All I wish to know is, why did they not do so during the war?

Mr. RILEY.—They did.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—They inaugurated a flat rate, and the other mills had no say; they had to accept or reject that rate. It has been asserted that in three years some of the Australian mills wiped out the whole of their capital costs. That meant, in certain instances, at least, the making of profits as high as 33 per cent. And, if that was so, the Com-

monwealth mill also made a profit of 33 per cent. If there was any profiteering at all, it was shared in by the Commonwealth establishment. I am not complaining of the profits made by the private mills, because they did not fix the prices; and, going back over a period of years, it must be admitted that those mills did not make undue profits.

Mr. RILEY.—The Government fixed a flat rate only in respect of military materials, but Australian manufacturers could sell other than those for whatever prices they liked.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—A flat rate was fixed for military materials, and, in order to meet the demands upon the mills, those establishments worked three shifts.

Mr. RILEY.—Making cloth for civilians.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Very little was made for the civilian members of the community, because the Government commandeered the mills to the tune of three shifts per day for a considerable period. If these mills did so well that they could wipe out their capital cost in three years, which they otherwise could not have done in thirty years, it is time a reduction in price was made.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—It is more like nine than three years.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Some did it in three years, and the honorable member knows it. If these mills were able to defray their capital cost in such a short period, surely they are in a better position to extend their operations than they have ever been before.

Mr. PROWSE.—Why give them a 30 per cent. protection?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—There is the other side of the question, and on this point I am sure the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best) will support me. Since 1914 the overhead costs of these industries have increased by 60 per cent., and taking that into consideration with the other points I have mentioned concerning the assurance that big British companies are likely to establish mills in Australia it would be indiscreet and altogether unwise to amend these rates. In view of the altered conditions we should be obtaining material from Australian mills at a lower rate than we are. There has been very little reduction in the price of tweeds, flannels,

and blankets unless it has taken place within the last few days.

Mr. RILEY.—Wool has dropped in price.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Yes, especially blanket wool, and not only are we not getting a cheaper article, but the supply of blankets and flannels, particularly is altogether inadequate. What is the reason?

Mr. GABB.—Because they are not working three shifts for the public.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It is not that. Many of the operatives will not work on Saturday.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Tell that to old women and not to us.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I am telling what I know to be a fact. Many are not working on Saturday because they earn sufficient in five days to keep them going.

Mr. RILEY. — That does not apply to factories; they work on Saturdays.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It applies to Lobethal, in South Australia, where they have difficulty in getting many of the operatives to work at all on Saturdays.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Where are the men and women who worked three shifts?

Mr. GABB.—They never worked three shifts per day at Lobethal.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I did not say they did; I was referring generally to mills on war work, but the manager at Lobethal informed me that the employees would not work on Saturdays. It should be the policy of woollen mill proprietors to come as near as possible to the consumers in the matter of distribution, and if honorable members are anxious to see the cost of living reduced they should do something in that direction.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Why not cut out wages?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The mills should come as near as possible to the consumers by re-arranging their methods of distribution. The honorable member for Kooyong said it was a difficult matter, and would be altogether too costly for individual mills to deal with retailers. The honorable member for Corio (Mr. Lister), who cannot see beyond the boundaries of Geelong, holds a similar opinion. I forget the figure he mentioned, but I know it was extortionate.

Mr. LISTER.—It was 12s. a yard.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—That is nonsense.

Mr. LISTER.—I know that the cost of manufacturing certain cloths is 12s. a yard, and that the material is sold to-day at from 25s. to 27s. per yard.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Does that apply to Geelong?

Mr. LISTER.—To mills generally.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—If it applies to Geelong the mills there need tuning up. Let me inform the honorable member for Swan (Mr. Prowse) that if the imposition of a duty of 30 per cent. will be the means of British manufacturing industries becoming established in Australia, and our people receiving cheaper woollen goods, the duty is more than justified. In the matter of distribution I may inform honorable members that the Lobethal mills in South Australia have never sold their goods to the wholesale houses, but have gone to the distributors in every part of the State. Perhaps it would interest the honorable member for Corio to know that this factory has not only distributed its goods in South Australia, but its representatives have come over the border into Victoria, and sold their product in competition with goods manufactured in Geelong, notwithstanding that the honorable member says that the Geelong factories cannot afford to meet the cost of distribution. If the Lobethal mills can afford to distribute their product others can. With additional mills established in different parts of the Commonwealth production and competition will increase, and the natural result will be that woollen goods will be sold to the consumer at a lower rate.

Mr. ANSTEY (Bourke) [9.9].—I intend to oppose the amendment for a reduction in the rate, and to support one for an increase in the duties proposed by the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene). I am going to oppose the amendment for the reasons put forward by the Free Trade member for Swan (Mr. Prowse), and I cannot support the proposed rate submitted by the Protectionist gentleman who now occupies the position of Minister for Trade and Customs. I have already given my reasons for supporting the highest Tariff that

may be submitted to enable our raw material to be worked up in Australia instead of being sent to other countries for that purpose. From the beginning of this discussion I have not heard any stronger reasons furnished for the imposition of a high Tariff than those submitted by honorable members who are opposed to high duties. I desire to see industries established in the Commonwealth, not in the interests of the capitalist or the workmen, but in the interests of the country generally, but not necessarily under a capitalistic régime. I want to see a self-sustained country with manufacturing industries which will furnish us with a large variety of occupations capable of keeping men fit, so that they will always be in a position to defend our country. I feel that these industries are necessary, and not merely to the capitalistic State. A change is coming and it may come to-morrow, next year, or even the year after, when we transfer this capitalistic State to a Bolshevik paradise, when the honorable member for Barrier (Mr. Considine) and the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) will be the Trotskys and Lenins of this new world, the honorable members for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best) and North Sydney (Sir Granville Ryrie) will have to demonstrate their loyalty by kissing the red flag. Even in that State, and under the system changed from that which we have to that which we desire, the woollen industry will still be necessary. It will be as absolutely essential to the Bolshevistic State as it is to the capitalistic State. The Red armies of to-morrow will need to be supplied with clothes, and, therefore, I support it. I have heard the honorable member for Indi (Mr. Robert Cook) and the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster) talk of the scandalous conduct of the workmen of this country who will not work. They go so slow that their employers are dying of starvation. I listened again to the arguments put forward by the honorable member for Swan (Mr. Prowse), who told us that in this industry people put in 10s. and draw out £1. He told us that people who started in the industry have, out of their profits, doubled and trebled their

capital in two or three years. This was in a particular State where half the country and two-thirds of the population are under the domination of the odious Labour party. One honorable member tells us that the workmen will not work, or work so slowly that the bosses cannot make any money, and he is answered by the honorable member for Swan. The honorable member for Wakefield tells the Committee that the slower the workmen work the more profits the bosses make. What an absurdity! Then there is another country, England. The honorable member for Wakefield believes in the establishment of industries in this country and in a Tariff of 40 or 45 per cent. against Jap, Jew, and Gentile, but, apparently, he desires competition from Free Trade England. What can it matter to Australia from which country products come that enter into competition with locally-manufactured goods? If our ports and our markets are flooded with products from overseas, how can we be good Australians if on the one hand we say that we must protect the products of Australia and on the other we wave the flag and say that it does not matter what goods are brought here from a particular part of the earth? So far as the exclusion of products from outside is concerned, we have as much right to exclude them if coming from one country as from another. The Minister has told us what has occurred under the Tariff which we had before, which, I believe, was 25 per cent.

Mr. RILEY.—Forty-five per cent.

Mr. ANSTEY.—No; we are not coming down. The Tariff now proposed is higher, and not lower, than the previous Tariff.

Mr. GREENE.—The previous Tariff was 25 per cent.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Even with that Tariff in this country, where nobody works, bosses made millions of profits. There are other countries where the people work, we are told, from early morn to late at night. We read in the newspapers that the cotton-spinners and weavers of England are accepting a 40 per cent. reduction in wages. Workman after workman, and organization after organization, are accepting reductions in

Mr. Anstey.

wages, in order to get a chance in the markets of the world. This is in a country where there is little or no competition between the "Micks" and the Methodists, an actual paradise where every one is loyal to the Government. Yet, according to the Minister for Trade and Customs, capitalists are leaving this paradise and coming to this country where no one works, where some men are earning 8s. a day for shovelling 2 tons of sulphur in a week, and where we are told that men are getting £17 a week to play poker in a boiler, where men on the wharfs are earning £2 per day, and the bricklayers, who previously laid 2,000 bricks a day, now lay nothing. I can tell the honorable member for Swan, who has told us this story, that under the Tariff it is apparent that we are getting the finest class of immigrants we could get.

Mr. PROWSE.—What story did I tell the honorable member?

Mr. ANSTEY.—I do not know how the honorable member made it out, but I sat here and listened to his story that capitalists in the woollen industry put a certain amount of capital into it and drew it out over and over again in profits in something like two or three years.

Mr. PROWSE.—I made no reference to that at all.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Well, I have not been outside the chamber, I have not been downstairs or upstairs. I have a distinct recollection of hearing such a statement, and I ask the Minister for Trade and Customs whether the honorable member for Swan did not tell the Committee that enormous profits were made by certain people who engaged in the manufacture of woollens.

Mr. GREENE.—I say, frankly, that I cannot remember.

Mr. GREGORY.—Does the honorable member withdraw?

Mr. ANSTEY.—No, I do not. The Minister is so dependent on votes from the Country party's corner that he dare not controvert anything said by honorable members of that party. I distinctly remember that the Minister this afternoon answered arguments, which now, apparently, were never used. Did not the honorable gentleman explain the

circumstances in which men in certain industries made profits?

Mr. GREENE.—I was answering the honorable member for Dampier.

Mr. ANSTEY.—The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) and the honorable member for Swan (Mr. Prowse) are birds from the same nest, and we need not argue which of them told the story to which I have referred.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member had better apologize to the honorable member for Swan.

Mr. ANSTEY.—I apologize to the honorable member for Swan and heap my deadly insults on the honorable member for Dampier. Here we have a Tariff that is furnishing us with the most desirable class of immigrants. It is no longer necessary for us to have a forced system of immigration. We need no longer spend scores of thousands of pounds and send immigration agents abroad to various countries of the world to bring workmen to this country when we discover that the imposition of a 40 per cent. Tariff will bring out great capitalists from England to engage in our industries. If we put on another 20 per cent. we shall bring capitalists from all parts of the world to enjoy the results pointed out by the honorable member for Swan.

Mr. PROWSE.—What did I point out?

Mr. ANSTEY.—I am wrong; I refer to the honorable member for Dampier. The honorable member wants to reduce the duty. He would cut down the enormous profits made for the bosses in this paradise by workmen who do very little work; where we are cursed with all sorts of obnoxious doctrines, with conflicts of various sects, where men will not work, or play poker in a boiler, or shovel 2 tons of sulphur a week for 8s. a day, and go to the factory only five days in the week, and work only one out of the five, and where the less the workmen do the greater the profits of the bosses. Why should honorable members furnish such arguments as these? A Tariff, to be worth anything at all, should be such as will maintain the industries of the country. According to some of our honorable friends opposite, there is no country where working men work fewer hours per day, do less work, and get more pay than they do in Australia. There is no

other country in which capitalists engaged in industry are making greater profits, and there is no country in the world to which capitalists are more anxious to come than this Australia of ours, where, according to the arguments we have just heard, no man ever works. Surely that is a strong argument in favour of a Protectionist Tariff. The honorable member for Dampier says that he is a Protectionist—that he wants a Tariff that will keep out importations from every country except Great Britain. He desires, however, that imports from Great Britain should be allowed to come in free. I do not want to see imports coming in from any country. The fundamental policy of our people should be to make Australia self-contained so far as her industries are concerned. I care not by what methods we secure it, or under what system we live, that should be our fundamental gospel.

Mr. GREGORY.—Will the honorable member tell us in what way these Protective duties have improved the conditions of the workers of Australia?

Mr. ANSTEY.—The honorable member puts that question to me despite the fact that he himself has furnished a clear and distinct argument in support of the contention that a Protective Tariff benefits the people of the country. The honorable member says that in all other countries the workers receive low wages and work long hours, whereas in this country they receive enormous wages, and do no work.

Mr. GREGORY.—I did not say that.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Then the honorable member differs from some of his *confrères*. The honorable member for Indi (Mr. Robert Cook) has put forward that view, and the Assistant Minister for Defence (Sir Granville Ryrie) indorses it. The honorable member for Dampier spasmodically adopts different views. There have been a number of manufacturers about the precincts of this chamber who look at the Tariff from the point of view of their own interest. I do not object to any one coming into the lobbies and trying to convince me that a certain view is right, especially if they come along with the right sort of argument. Manufacturers have furnished many reasons why there should be a higher Tariff to protect the industries in which they are interested. The views of some of these gentlemen have been expressed by the honorable member for Corio (Mr.

Lister). He has told us that woollen manufacturers in this country can pay high wages to workmen who will not work—do not forget that they do not work; they simply look on whilst machines do the work for them—and that they can make good profits by turning out cloth which they sell for 8s., 10s., or 12s. per yard, as the case may be. The general public, however, do not get that cloth for 8s., or 10s., or 12s. a yard. What they have to pay is something like three times the price charged for the cloth at the factory. The people who make the most profits out of the products of our factories are not the manufacturers, who put their brains and their money into their enterprises, nor the workmen employed in those factories, but warehousemen, who do not employ one labourer or invest one penny in the process of manufacturing goods, but simply draw into their warehouses the products of various factories, and sell them over the counter loaded with the blackmail which they levy on the general community.

Mr. GREGORY.—Is not the manufacturer to blame? When he is given special protection, should he not see that the consumers, in turn, get some benefit?

Mr. ANSTEY.—Yes. But in the absence of massed production it is impossible for many of our manufacturers to sell direct to the people. Massed production in a country like this is of the greatest importance. Where you have a lot of little industries growing under the influence of the Tariff, the men conducting those industries and possessing only a small capital find themselves very largely at the mercy of the wholesale establishments. I know of a manufacturer in this city—not in my own constituency—who could not induce any of the wholesale houses to handle his product. In his predicament he went to a man in Smith-street, and said, "Will you try to place my goods?" The Smith-street business man agreed to do so, and placed them all over Australia. No sooner had he done so than the big wholesale houses told him that if he put out any more of those goods they would refuse to supply him with other materials that he required. He was blackmailed, and could do nothing. That state of affairs is not due to any failure on the part of the Tariff. It should be part of our national policy to provide common storage for the output of our factories

as a protection against the Flinders-lane people and that class of retailers who charge the people three times the factory cost of the goods they sell. The honorable member for Cook (Mr. J. H. Cairns) recently brought into this building samples of ladies' stockings made in Australia. The employees in the factory receive good wages, and the proprietor is able to get a fair return on his capital by selling these stockings at 12s. per dozen. That is the factory cost, but the people have to pay four times that price for them. The factory cost is doubled, in some cases it is trebled, by the wholesale houses, and then the retailer has to get his profit. I am quite prepared to admit that, given a monopolistic industry, you get exploitation, but the exploitation of the people of Australia is carried out for the most part by men who do not put a penny into manufacturing enterprises. It will be necessary for the Government to take other action to protect the people in that respect. Despite the high wages paid, the alleged indifference of our workmen, and the fact that we are told that they work only a few hours per day, the actual costs of the output of our factories are as low as costs in any other country. What we have to protect ourselves against is not the cost of the products as sold at our factories, but the exploitation to which the people are subjected after the goods leave the factories. The argument raised by those who are opposed to the Minister's proposal, and also raised by the Minister himself, affords me an opportunity to show what this country can do, and to state once more that I am prepared to support the Minister or anybody who raises the Tariff one step higher, not for the benefit of any individual, be he the investor of capital or the man who labours, but fundamentally with the object of establishing industries. Under any and every method, I support the establishment of industries which can be better carried on here than in any other country in the world.

Mr. LIVINGSTON (Barker) [9.30].—I regard the woollen industry as one of the most important in this country. It is well known that Australia produces not only the finest class of wool in the world, but also the best class of workmen. We are an educated people, 80 per cent. of whom are able to have accounts in Savings

Banks or other banks. The foundation of this industry is the grower of wool, and then comes the shearer. We know that every shearer is paid according to the result of his labour, as I believe every man in every industry should be paid. The honorable member for Ballarat (Mr. McGrath) has told us that few working men, when they die, leave any estate subject to probate duties; but I can inform that honorable member that in my district many of the landholders started as shearers. They have achieved their present position because they have always been allowed to do their best as good men; and this shows that every man should be paid according to the results of his labour. I should like to see the woollen industry so established as to make every man employed in it a shareholder in the business and in the profits, for this provides the strongest incentive for him to give of his best. In Australia to-day the great mistake is made of always starting new industries in the big cities. Why should not the manufacture of wool be conducted in our big wool centres, where there is water running to waste, and every facility for successful operations? All that is required is to take the workmen there, and house them at cheap rents. When Mr. Smail came to Australia to select the best sites for woollen mills, he traversed the whole of the country, including the south-eastern portion of South Australia, which he described as the best place in the world for the purpose. In that part of Australia there is the necessary water, wood, wool, and so forth; but Mr. Smail pointed out that there were no conveniences for working men, including cottages and schools. This had to be admitted; but I pointed out to Mr. Smail that in South Australia we had the most beautiful stone to be found in any part of the Empire, and that we can build more cheaply there than elsewhere. It would be easy, I said, to remove the workmen to the mills in the country, and provide schools and other conveniences. However, the tendency is to take all industries into the big cities; and under any immigration policy we may adopt, we must endeavour to get the people on to the land in the country, for unless this is done Australia can never progress. We

require the establishment of many industries, but we cannot hope for them if an educated people is ground down without a proper share of the proceeds of the work they do. What is required is a system something like that adopted at the Sunlight soap works and Cadbury's cocoa factories in England. If the workers in England can be given a share in the profits, why not in Australia? We all know that the men who are the best paid do the best work. The honorable member for Corio (Mr. Lister) submitted that the manufacturers of wool should be the distributors.

Mr. LISTER.—I did not say that.

Mr. LIVINGSTON.—When the honorable member for Ballarat (Mr. McGrath) said that that was what the honorable member had contended, the latter offered no contradiction. We all know that it is impossible for manufacturers to do the distributing work; there must be distributors as well as manufacturers, as there have been from time immemorial. I do not believe in low wages, because, in my opinion, our Australian workmen are capable of earning every shilling they receive, and more. As to the proposed duty on onions, if there is a country in the world that can grow this commodity it is Australia, especially in the Western District of Victoria and the south-east of South Australia. Onions and potatoes are to-day £3 per ton, and living in Australia is cheaper than in any other country. We have every necessary of life here, and all that is wanted is proper distribution. So far as food is concerned, there is the greatest trouble in the matter of distribution; but I hope that before long we shall have cheap woollen goods, for, goodness knows, clothing and blankets are very badly required at the present time.

Mr. GABB (Angas) [9.36].—It is my intention to oppose the amendment for reduction of duty, and to support the schedule. I understand that one honorable member on this side intends to move for even a higher duty than that proposed by the Minister; but if such an amendment is submitted, I shall oppose it. While a Protectionist, I recognise the truth of the statement made by the honorable member for Moreton (Mr. Wienholt), who said that if we go in "red hot" for Protection, the pendu-

lum will, in due course, swing back. With that point of view I agree, and I shall oppose any proposed increase which I think gives undue Protection to any particular item. However, my purpose in rising was not to state my attitude in regard to items, but to answer a statement made by the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster), who, in a somewhat similar spirit to that displayed by the honorable member for Indi (Mr. Robert Cook), complains that the workers do not seem prepared to do a fair thing.

Mr. ROBERT COOK.—I said some of them do not.

Mr. GABB.—The honorable member for Wakefield also had a complaint against the woollen mills because the demand for blankets and flannels is not being met. When he said that, I interjected, "Why cannot they work three shifts?" meaning the mills, and the honorable member replied, "They will not work even one shift," meaning the workers. Then the honorable member went on to refer to the Lobethal Mills. We have done some curious things in South Australia in regard to changing names under the influence of that pseudo-patriotism so much abroad, and the place that was called Lobethal is now known as Tweedvale. This is in my electorate, and I know the class of people engaged at the woollen mills. They are an industrious country community, affording an example of what honorable members in the Government corner describe as the decentralization of industries. If I am not mistaken, the mills were established in that district because of the known industrial habits of the people, settlers of German origin, and I resent the accusation by the honorable member for Wakefield that they are lazy.

Mr. BOWDEN.—Do they work on a Saturday?

Mr. GABB.—I cannot say; but if they do not, that innovation must be of recent date. If my memory serves me right, during the war that mill was never worked three shifts, and when I interjected that three shifts might be worked now, I had in mind the fact that if in war time the mills in near metropolitan areas were worked three shifts under pressure for the military authorities to supply military needs, the same mills might now work

three shifts to meet the keen demand for blankets and flannels for civilian purposes mentioned by the honorable member for Wakefield. I am satisfied that employees are available to work the metropolitan mills three shifts, if the owners want to do so; but probably the present high prices suit the managers and shareholders, and they are not keen on bringing down the cost too rapidly. A prominent member of the Senate said the other night that wool for blankets was recently sold to the manufacturer as low as 1d. per lb., and that the average price was about 3d. I am prepared to accept his statement, because he is intimately associated with the woollen industry, and is, probably, one of the most prominent woollen experts in Australia. Certainly he is not a Labour man, and therefore, it cannot be said he would make any statement against the mill-owners unless the position was as he stated. It is up to the woollen manufacturers of this country, if there is an extra demand for blankets and flannel, to try and meet it. I believe in Protection to help our manufacturers to establish industries, but I also want fair treatment for the employees and the consuming public. I hope the schedule will stand, because I am confident that if there is one business in which we can hold our own with the rest of the world, it is the production of woollen goods, provided we give our manufacturers sufficient protection to enable them to become well established.

MR. PROWSE (Swan) [9.44].—The honorable member for Indi (Mr. Robert Cook) made some reference a few minutes ago to two Combines that were co-operating in connexion with this item. The exact language used by him does not concern me very much, though it seems to have perturbed some honorable members. Reference has also been made to a statement of mine. The honorable member for Ballarat (Mr. McGrath) says he is glad that he does not belong to the Corner party. I am sure that we do not envy him his position. He made it clear that he was quite satisfied that the Tariff increased the cost of living, and he is so consistent that he is going to vote for increased duties on these items. The honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster), to my mind, was just as inconsistent. He recognised that if effi-

ciency were insured under a reasonably competitive system, there would be no need for this 30 per cent. Tariff, but because other manufacturers propose to come to Australia to join in the Combine to exploit the people of Australia, he is going to vote for the increases. The honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) is prepared to defend the working man, whether right or wrong, and he pointed out that the warehousemen are exploiting the people. But what does the warehouseman exploit the people out of? Do not honorable members see clearly that there is a defectiveness within Australia? And is an increased Tariff to remedy this state of affairs. Are we going to continue covering up our incompetence by increasing the Tariff indefinitely? The manager of the Bureau of Commerce knows that, whenever he is prepared to go on with his woollen mill scheme, he can have £1,000 of my capital to help the project; but I still will argue that 25 per cent. duty, together with the other loaded charges in our favour as against manufacturers at the other end of the world, is ample. Honorable members cannot raise the black-labour question in regard to this industry, as they have done in regard to other industries. Our competitors employ white labour, paid at the same rate of wages as our own workmen. As a matter of fact, their coal is dearer, and their facilities generally are not so good as in Australia. In these circumstances, I cannot see why, by asking for increased duties, we should declare our inefficiency. The mere fact that honorable members opposite are asking for such high protection is an admission of inefficiency. The honorable member for Bourke drew attention to certain figures which I submitted two or three days ago in connexion with this item, but I may point out that I was not then referring to companies. I mentioned that the Commonwealth Government, under the War Precautions Act, had commandeered twenty-two of the mills already in existence in Australia, with a capital of £1,144,000, and operated them for two years and four months at a profit of £1,177,000, thus making it possible within that period, to pay off the whole of the capital cost, and have £63,000 to the good. These are the industries for which increased protection is now asked. It might be said that they were operated

under exceptional circumstances; but they did not work longer than eight hours a shift. This shows clearly that woollen manufacture is a natural secondary industry to Australia. It is a libel to say that members of the Corner party are Free Traders. If it can be shown that any industry honestly needs protection, we are prepared to concede it. We are ready to consider this question of Tariff duties from all stand-points. There are other industries to be considered, and we want honorable members to apply to them the same line of argument as they would use for their own pet industries. In the interest of Australia I hope that they will do so.

Mr. LAZZARINI (Werriwa) [9.51].—I am opposed to any reduction in these duties.

Mr. WIENHOLT.—Will you support an increase?

Mr. LAZZARINI.—One at a time is said to be good fishing. When the proposal for an increase is before the Committee it will be time to state my position in that regard. Honorable members who ask for a reduction of the duty on woollen goods argue that the local manufacturers do not require the protection given and ought to be able to compete with outside goods on a smaller duty, but they lose sight of the fact that the question of the high cost of living or high price of commodities is not solved by the adoption of either a Free Trade or a Protective policy. If we develop our industries by imposing a high Tariff we are justified in doing it, so long as we take steps to prevent the local manufacturer from fleecing the people by making excessive profits, but I repudiate the suggestion of the honorable member for Swan (Mr. Prowse) that honorable members of the Labour party are looking to Protection to solve the question of the high cost of living. Whether we adopt a policy of Protection or Free Trade we shall always have control of prices by Combines either inside or outside Australia. The honorable members for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) and Swan (Mr. Prowse) have spoken of the overhead charges of sending our raw material away and bringing it back again in the manufactured state; and it is a disgrace to think that our primary products—wools, metals, and other lines—have to go

abroad and be brought back as finished articles.

Mr. PROWSE.—Does the honorable member imagine that the Australian consumer will get his clothes cheaper by the increased duty?

Mr. LAZZARINI.—The Labour party will see that he gets his clothes at a reasonable rate.

Mr. PROWSE.—But why is the honorable member prepared to give the woollen mills conditions under which they will be allowed to exploit us further?

Mr. LAZZARINI.—I am not prepared to do so. If the honorable member and others had followed our advice nine months ago when we put forward certain suggestions the manufacturers would not be doing this. I have had a long experience in the retail trade, and I know that the Combines and Trusts that bind the retailers most effectively are the importing firms. Of course, we realize that these Combines are but the natural development of the growth of commercialism, but nevertheless we must deal with them. The honorable member for Swan has claimed that the manufacture of woollen goods is a natural secondary industry for Australia. He is quite right, and I shall give my support to a duty which will afford it some protection. If a still higher duty is proposed I shall give the matter consideration when the time comes to do so.

Mr. CONSIDINE (Barrier) [9.55].—I have listened to the debate on this particular item of the Tariff with a good deal of interest. It has been rather amusing to listen to the arguments put forward on both sides, in the main justifying the item in the schedule or an increase in the duty. One honorable member sitting in the corner has denied the allegation that his party is a Free Trade party. It appears to me, after listening to the debate, that there is not a Free Trader in the House.

Mr. HILL.—Except the honorable member.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—I am not a Free Trader, nor am I a Protectionist. It seems to me that honorable members want protective duties on the goods they have to sell, and a reduced Tariff or none at all on the commodities or articles they wish to purchase or use.

Mr. PROWSE.—There are very few items which the farmers sell that can be protected by ordinary methods.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—The honorable member's party has been very loud in demanding Protection for primary products, and in asking for Free Trade on agricultural machinery and other items. Other honorable members urge that the present Tariff should be maintained, or that the duties should be higher still. We are treated to the statement that the Australian worker works a jolly sight harder than do workers elsewhere. It is a very dubious compliment from my point of view to hear it said that the Australian engaged in any industry can produce more profit for the employing class than do his fellows in other countries. The honorable member for Werriwa (Mr. Lazzarini) takes up the same attitude as myself when he says that it is a case of tweedledum and tweedledee to the working classes, having regard to the conditions under which they are living at present whether they have Protection or Free Trade. That being the case, why should the representatives of the working class support either policy? I think it was Sir George Reid who labelled the Labour party as "fiscal atheists" because they supported either Free Traders or Protectionists so long as their own programme was carried out. I do not agree with the stand-point taken up by the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey), but the reason he advanced for representatives of the working classes supporting a Protective Tariff was to my mind the most logical. He said that it would help to develop the country industrially by causing fresh industries to be established, which in time the workers might take over and utilize in their own interests, instead of helping their political and economic enemies to increase their opportunities of exploiting the great masses of the people. My duty, as a representative of the workers, is not to take sides in matters that are the exclusive concern of the two divisions of the exploiting elements, the importers and manufacturers. If our contention is correct, that the workers, as a class, are exploited in the factories, mines, and workshops, that the fiscal issue is only a question of a high Tariff and high wages or Free

Trade and low wages, and that the worker receives, on the average, only sufficient to keep him and his family, irrespective of whether the Protectionist or the Free Trader rules, my duty, as a working-class representative, is not to take sides with either section of the exploiters, but to say, "Gentlemen, settle it in your own way," and to point out to the workers that it is their duty to organize themselves with a view to altering the economic system, eliminate profit making, and utilize the machinery of wealth production in their own interests. In this way they will put an end to these controversies that mean nothing to them.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [10.2].—I have moved a reduction of the duty on woollen goods imported from the United Kingdom, and not one argument has been advanced to show that the duty proposed in the schedule is necessary for the carrying on of woollen manufacture in Australia. The last duty imposed by this Parliament on woollens was 25 per cent., which I ask shall be continued.

Mr. GABB.—The honorable member has not adduced any argument to prove that the additional duty is not necessary.

Mr. GREGORY.—It has been shown that the manufacturers have made enormous profits, that during the war they did not care a straw for the interests of the people, and that flannels and blankets are almost unobtainable in Australia today. I am asking for a little concession to the Old Country. The honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster) said that he would support a 30 per cent. duty because of a statement made by the Minister (Mr. Greene) regarding the probability of large firms in England establishing woollen factories in the Commonwealth. In 1891 the Victorian Parliament, which was strongly Protectionist, imposed a 30 per cent. duty on woollens at the instance of the then Minister for Customs (Sir Robert Best). Can anybody say that that high duty was beneficial either to Victoria or to the woollen industry? I am satisfied that it was not. When one compares the Tariff of that period and the destitution prevalent in Victoria at about that time, with the great progress made in New South Wales under a more rational policy, he is justified in assuming that heavy protective duties were not good for Victoria, and will not

be good for Australia during the next few years. Not long after the passing of the McKinley Tariff in America, Congress went to the country, and the party responsible for the high duties was ignominiously defeated. I am satisfied that the same result will follow the imposition of this Tariff in Australia. I commend to the attention of honorable members the article on "Imperial Protection" by M. O. Coates, at page 20, in the book which the Minister has provided for the use of members, and which has been prepared by one who seems to be making a living out of high Protection. If honorable members realized the sacrifices made by the Old Country they would feel that it was their duty to give a little extra preference to our kinsmen overseas. If my amendment is defeated I shall move a further amendment to provide for a reduction of the duty a few years hence. I have always had the impression that these protective duties are needed for only a certain period, and I shall take further action accordingly.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted in sub-item F be so inserted (Mr. GREGORY's amendment) be agreed to—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	..	..	..	8
Noes	..	..	..	31

Majority	23
----------	----	----	----

AYES.

Bowden, E. K.	Wienholt, A.
Cook, Robert	
Foley, G.	Tellers:
Gregory, H.	Hill, W. C.
Prowse, J. H.	Page, James.

NOES.

Anstey, F.	Lazzarini, H. P.
Bayley, J. G.	Lister, J. H.
Bell, G. J.	Livingston, J.
Blakeley, A.	Mackay, G. H.
Blundell, R. P.	Makin, N. J. O.
Cameron, D. C.	Mathews, J.
Charlton, M.	McGrath, D. C.
Cook, Sir Joseph	Moloney, Parker
Corser, E. B. C.	Riley, E.
Cunningham, L. L.	Rodgers, A. S.
Foster, Richard	Ryrie, Sir Granville
Gabb, J. M.	Watkins, D.
Greene, W. M.	Wise, G. H.
Groom, L. E.	Tellers:
Hay, A.	Burchell, R. J.
Higgs, W. G.	Story, W. H.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. Gregory.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [10.13].—I move—

That the following words be added to sub-item F:—"And on and after 26th May, 1921, British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 45 per cent.; general, 50 per cent."

Mr. HILL.—Why not make it 100 per cent.?

Mr. MATHEWS.—It might be a sensible thing to do that. My reason for moving the amendment is that, after the late war, as after all wars, the commercial world is in a disturbed condition, and I am fearful of what may take place. I wish Australia to be prepared to meet eventualities; and, in my opinion, if we give this protection, we shall have outside manufacturers coming here to establish industries instead of confining their operations to Great Britain and other countries.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [10.16].—I suggested to the Minister the other day that leather cloth, which in the 1914 Tariff is included in item 105A, should be placed again in that position, instead of in item 105H. I ask the Minister if he has considered the suggestion?

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.17].—I have considered it, and have decided that in all the circumstances the article should be dutiable at the rates provided in item 105H. A small duty is imposed on it, as it is an article which comes into direct competition with Australian leather. I move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"1. Piece goods dutiable at a higher rate than that payable under this sub-item, imported for the manufacture of water-proofed piece goods, as prescribed by departmental by-laws, on and after 26th May, 1921, ad. val., British, 10; intermediate, 20; general, 25."

Honorable members will see that water-proofed cloth prepared with rubber, oil, and so on is dutiable at certain rates. It happens that a very light woollen material, which is not manufactured in this country, is used for waterproofing, and under the item as it stands is dutiable at 30, 40, and 45 per cent., the same rates being applicable to water-proofed cloth under sub-item H, that is, the raw material for water-proofing is dutiable at the same rates as the finished article. What I now seek to provide is, subject to departmental by-

laws, that if piece goods come in at a higher rate than these, they are to be charged at the rate in the new sub-item, that is to say, we allow manufacturers of waterproofing to get the raw material at a lower rate of duty than is charged on waterproof. They have the benefit of the difference between the rates on waterproof material, namely, 30, 40, and 45 per cent., and those now proposed. The proposition is, I think, a fair one. I have looked into it carefully since the Tariff was framed, and I recommend the Committee to accept it.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [10.20].—I hope that the Minister will report progress.

Mr. GREENE.—I desire to finish this item to-night.

Mr. GREGORY.—I suggest that amendments of the schedule which involve the insertion of new sub-items should be placed upon the business-paper.

Mr. GREENE.—That would give rise to a nice state of affairs.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—But is the method which is being followed fair to the Committee? We have not the knowledge that is possessed by the Minister. He makes a statement, and we have to swallow it.

Mr. GREENE.—It is a lower duty, and not a higher one, that is proposed.

Mr. GREGORY.—I wish to contest the right of the Minister under departmental by-laws to effect transfers from one item to another. I can cite instances in which, notwithstanding that Parliament has imposed specific duties upon certain articles, those duties have been remitted by the Minister. Under items 174 and 404 of the schedule, I intend to raise this matter.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Does the honorable member suggest that it should be made an urgent matter?

Mr. GREGORY.—I submit that it ought not to be within the province of the Minister to say that an article shall not bear the duty which has been imposed upon it by Parliament.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.23].—I appreciate the difficulty of the honorable member in following these alterations. But the particular alteration which I have proposed is a very simple one. We cannot put amendments upon the notice-paper because of the serious effect

that practice would have upon the revenue. These matters are kept absolutely secret in my own office. Only a few of my trusted officers know what amendments are to be proposed. We do not even give the Clerk of the House prior notice of them. Nobody knows what is going to be proposed until I rise and propose it.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—That is only in respect of a reduction of duty.

Mr. GREENE.—It applies both to a reduction and an increase of duty. If a man outside knows that a reduction is going to be proposed, he will not take anything out of bond. Upon the other hand, if he is aware that an increased duty is likely to be levied upon any article, he will take it out of bond as fast as possible. The honorable member for Dampier (**Mr. Gregory**) will, therefore, see that there is a very good reason why these amendments cannot be placed upon the notice-paper. In this particular instance, there is a class of raw material which is imported for the purpose of being manufactured into water-proofed goods. Under the Tariff, the same rate is charged upon this material as is levied upon the finished article. The latter, therefore, gets no protection whatever, and the amendment is designed to give it a certain measure of protection.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [10.26].—I desire to move the insertion of a new sub-item *j* relating to cotton goods in imitation of woollen, and I wish the rate of duty to be fixed at 35 per cent. under the British Preferential Tariff, 45 per cent. under the intermediate Tariff, and 50 per cent. under the general Tariff.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I rise to a point of order. Under a ruling which was given by the Chairman of Committees only last week, I submit that it is not competent for any private member to move the insertion of a new item.

The **DEPUTY CHAIRMAN** (**Mr. Atkinson**).—The honorable member for Maranoa is quite right. The ruling given was that it is not competent for any private member to move for the insertion of a new item in the schedule. My difficulty is to know whether the item which the honorable member for Melbourne Ports wishes to insert is connected

with any item which is already in the Tariff. If it be an entirely new item, he will not be in order in moving it.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—We have already placed a duty upon cotton goods.

Mr. MATHEWS.—We have coming into Australia to-day, in imitation of woollen goods; goods which are made entirely of cotton. Unless we place some duty upon them, the object which we have in view will be defeated. I hope that the Minister will do something in the direction which I have suggested before the Tariff reaches the Senate.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.29].—This matter has been brought under my notice only within the last day or two. I have not, therefore, had time to look into it. At the present moment, I do not feel disposed to take any action in the direction suggested. But, later on, if it be found necessary to take action along the lines suggested by the honorable member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews), I will reconsider the matter and acquaint the Committee with my decision in due course.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Progress reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

DELAYED DELIVERY OF TELEGRAM.

Motion (by Mr. GREENE) proposed—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. CONSIDINE (Barrier) [10.30].—

I have been asked to bring before the Postmaster-General a matter for serious complaint, having to do with the Telegraph Department. It is contained in a letter from the Secretary of the Australasian Coal and Shale Employees Federation, which is as follows—

I am enclosing a wire and a letter handed to me a few days ago at Lithgow. I think it nothing short of a scandal for a telegram to be kept locked up in a drawer in the post-office for about a week. The wife naturally felt keenly the loss of her child. Her grief, however, was accentuated by what she believed to be the callous treatment of her husband in failing to come home in response to her telegram, which was carefully locked up at the post-office, Lithgow. Can you do anything to shake the Postal authorities up?

The telegram referred to in that communication was despatched from Young to Mr. Ackley, care of the Lithgow Mine,

and it is dated, at Lithgow, 29th April. It is signed by Mrs. Ackley, and states—

Baby died this morning.

The wire was not delivered to Mr. Ackley until 7th May. The letter explaining the position, as written by Mr. Ackley to the Secretary of the Coal and Shale Employees Federation, states—

Concerning this wire, I have been calling three times a week regularly, and did so this week. I called yesterday and got a letter from Mrs. Ackley, asking me why I did not come home to fix things up. When I read the letter, I saw there was something wrong. I went back to the post-office and told them there was a death telegram there for me. The young man looked for twenty minutes, and came back and told me there was no wire there for me. This morning I saw the postmaster. He had a look, and came back with this wire, and told me that it had been locked up in a drawer. Very hard!

I ask the Postmaster-General if he will make full inquiries into this matter. I need not stress the hardship which has been imposed upon a bereaved family by, apparently, gross carelessness.

Mr. WISE (Gippsland—Postmaster-General) [10.32].—If the honorable member will let me have the telegram, together with the other particulars, I shall have full inquiries made into the whole of the circumstances to-morrow.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.

House of Representatives

Thursday, 26 May, 1921.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. F. Bamford) took the chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

DUTY ON PRUNES.

Mr. HILL.—When Item 53 of the Tariff schedule was under discussion, the Minister for Trade and Customs promised to consider whether an additional duty on prunes was necessary. Has he done so?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes, and the evidence gathered so far shows that American prunes are being dumped into this country at a price which would give the producer less than 1d. per lb. The inquiry,

however, is not complete. We are endeavouring to complete it as soon as possible, and if the first impression is borne out, I shall ask the Committee of Ways and Means to take suitable action.

IRON AND STEEL DUTIES.

COMPARISON WITH AMERICAN AND FRENCH TARIFFS.

Mr. WATKINS.—I wish to know if the Minister for Trade and Customs has had the contents of the documents circulated and authorized by the Australian Industries Protection League checked by the Customs Department, and, if so, can he indorse the certification of that organization in respect to—(a) the correctness of the comparisons, (b) the accuracy of the duties on the items contained in those comparative schedules.

Mr. GREENE.—Yes. I had the figures checked, and can vouch for their accuracy.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Mr. MACKAY.—I have received from a member of the Queensland Parliament a letter in which this passage occurs:—

Lake agreed to purchase a banana plantation, and he paid all the money he could on it. He has been in occupation for some time. He made application to the Soldiers' Settlement Board for an advance, and his application was recommended in March last, and his papers marked accordingly. Before the advance of £547 was made, the Board was advised by the Commonwealth Department not to make any more advances to applicants desiring to purchase freehold land, until after the end of the present financial year (June).

I ask the Minister if he will state again the arrangements now existing between the Commonwealth and the States for the settlement of soldiers on the land.

Mr. RODGERS.—The statement read by the honorable member is not correct, because the Commonwealth Government has not at any time asked the Queensland, or any other State, Government to refrain from purchasing freehold or other land. The Commonwealth Government undertook to provide the money necessary for the settlement of soldiers on the land, and agreed upon quotas of men and money for each State, this agreement being come to at two conferences of Commonwealth and State Ministers. Financial provision has been made by the Commonwealth Government during the present year for the settlement of soldiers

by the Queensland Government, and every claim made by the State which has been in order has been paid by us.

BUREAU OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

NEW APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. GIBSON.—I ask the Minister for Trade and Customs if it is intended that the officers to be appointed to two positions under the Bureau of Science and Industry shall start work almost immediately.

Mr. GREENE.—The appointments will date from the time that they are actually made, when the officers appointed will take up their duties.

AMERICAN SHAREHOLDERS.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—I ask the Acting Prime Minister if regulations are in existence under which Americans in this country are treated as aliens, and if obstacles are put in the way of their registering as shareholders in companies, or engaging in commercial enterprises in this country?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I am not aware that that is so. Regulations are in force which enable us to review certain proposals, but their object is certainly not interference with American capital and enterprise in this country, which we rather welcome. I have to learn that any disability has been placed on any American company here.

WAR GRATUITIES.

Mr. BELL.—Is the Acting Prime Minister in a position to make his promised statement regarding the cashing of war gratuity bonds?

Sir JOSEPH COOK (*By leave*).—I have a short statement to make about the war gratuity bonds and the relations between the Government and the soldiers in connexion with them.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Can we debate it?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I hope that it will not be debated. I propose merely to say what has been done. Honorable members will recollect that an arrangement was made by which the Government was to pay certain gratuities to all who had rendered war service. We were to pay 1s. 6d. per day to every member

of the Naval Forces and to every member of the Australian Imperial Force who went on active service outside Australia, the period for which payment was to be made being from the date of embarkation of each man to the 28th June, 1919. It was arranged, too, that we should pay a gratuity of 1s. per day to each man who had enlisted for active service but did not embark, and the maximum period for which this gratuity was to be paid was six months. To carry out these obligations it was estimated that £30,000,000 would be required, and as that was considered at that time a sum that would strain the financial resources of the country, having regard to our other heavy war obligations, it was decided to issue bonds bearing interest at the rate of $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., free of taxation, and redeemable in 1924. The original understanding was that this would be a four years' arrangement, and that the total amount involved would be £30,000,000, but it seems to me now that when all liabilities have been met in connexion with the issue of these bonds the expenditure will be within £28,000,000.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The Government ought to pay the other £2,000,000 to the sailors of the mercantile marine.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—We have about as much as we can manage now. The bonds actually issued to the 30th April represented £25,831,936. Some claims have not yet been lodged—why, I do not know; but perhaps some soldiers or dependants do not intend to lodge them. Others have been lodged, but have not yet been determined. All sorts of complications arise, even in so simple a matter as determining who is the rightful claimant. Sometimes there are two claimants for the same bond. Many other phases of the kind are being investigated by the Board set up for the purpose. A great many claims are only now being sent in. But I should think that another £2,000,000 will cover the balance of our liabilities. Of the £25,831,936 worth of bonds issued, cash payments have been made by the Government through the banks to the amount of £6,000,000. In addition, cash payments have been made directly by the Government totalling £2,276,372. Other bonds have been cashed by employers, traders, life assurance companies, and others, to a value of £5,136,799. The total cash or cash

equivalent received by the soldiers and their dependants to the end of April amounted to £13,413,171. The bonds still held by soldiers and dependants total £12,418,765. It will be seen, therefore, that of the total bonds issued more than half have been already cashed. The Government have all along continued the practice of cashing bonds in necessitous cases, and for soldiers wishing to marry. If a soldier is in particularly necessitous circumstances he applies to the Treasury, and after investigation of the man's position we cash his bond.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—It is almost impossible to prove necessitous circumstances.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—They have been proved to the amount of £2,276,000, however great the difficulty may be. I know that some cases are most difficult and complex, and for a variety of reasons. In all, 320,000 gratuities have been issued, of which 170,000 have been already cashed. I hope the bulk of the holders of the remaining 150,000 will continue to hold their bonds, for I cannot help feeling, as I have said all along, that those who do hang on to them will be glad in the sequel that they did so. The bonds are returning good interest, the income from them is tax free, and I am quite sure that any soldier who can hold them will be glad that he did so. At the time the bonds were issued, certain requests were made to the Government for the payment of cash, and an arrangement was made by which £6,000,000 worth would be cashed immediately by the banks on presentation of the bonds. We promised, further, to liquidate another £10,000,000 worth by the end of the present month. We placed first in the category of those who are to obtain cash out of the £6,000,000 provided by the banks widows of members of the Forces, and next in order of preference come widowed mothers of unmarried deceased members of the Forces, mothers of deceased members if they were dependent on the deceased members, blind or totally and permanently incapacitated members of the Forces, members who married after discharge, and persons found by the War Gratuity Board to be in necessitous circumstances. All other classes of persons were to be paid by non-negotiable bonds maturing

not later than May, 1924. The Government also undertook that a further sum of £10,000,000 would be provided in May of this year. The moment I realized our liability for May, I set to work to try to move off the bonds as safely as possible, taking all the care we could to insure that the soldier was not dealt with unjustly in the cashing transactions. I do not pretend to say that some soldiers have not "fallen in." I know only too well and regretfully that they have done so. But we cannot avoid all these happenings whilst human nature is what it is. We have done our best to prevent the soldier being "taken down," and I believe with very successful results, on the whole. My idea was to get out as much cash as possible in anticipation of the obligation falling due this month, and the result is that at the present moment nearly £14,000,000 worth of cash is in the hands of the soldiers or dependants.

Mr. McGRATH.—The Government have provided only £8,000,000 of it.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Of course; but no private employer could have found the other £6,000,000, if we had not permitted him to do so, and if we had not scrutinized the conditions under which he found it. The original arrangement was that these bonds were to be non-negotiable. Had that contract with the soldiers been carried out, many of them would have been kept out of the cash until the end of this month, so that the soldier has gained everything by cashing his bond when he found it most convenient to do so.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—A large number of the soldiers wish that they had not cashed them.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Probably they do. I have made arrangements to cash as many bonds as are necessary to complete the total of £16,000,000, which was promised to the soldiers by the end of this month.

Mr. GREGORY.—That will mean an additional £1,500,000.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—It means that slightly over £2,000,000 will have to be found to carry out this arrangement.

Mr. J. H. CATTS.—How is priority to be established?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—We propose to determine priority by need in the same way as we have been doing all along. After having discussed the whole matter with the representatives of the soldiers, they agree with me that we cannot get a better tribunal than the one which we already have. Criticism has, of course, been levelled against them, but they have carried through a task of great complexity and difficulty, and, upon the whole, have carried it through with striking success. One reason for that is that all the members of the War Gratuity Board are themselves returned soldiers, and therefore may be expected to be in sympathy with those who are claimants for this cash. General Wisdom, who was the President of the first War Gratuities Board, is at present the administrator of New Guinea. His administrative experience at the Front stood him in good stead. In addition to being an able man possessed of plenty of good common sense, he has had all the experience of a soldier, and knows the psychology of a soldier, and all these things, I have no doubt, helped him to make the cashing of these bonds the success that it was upon the whole. The position, therefore, is that when an additional £2,000,000 has been found we shall have discharged the promises we made to the soldier in full. Indeed, we shall have more than discharged what was in our minds at the time those promises were made. Then, the idea was that there would be about £30,000,000 worth of these gratuity bonds issued, and the estimate that £16,000,000 worth of them would be redeemed by the end of May was based upon that issue. We propose to give the soldiers £16,000,000 cash, notwithstanding that the bonds actually issued will really fall £2,000,000 short of the original estimate. I have no need to occupy further time. That is the proposal which we are making. It has been approved by the executive of the Soldiers' League, with whom I have been a good deal in consultation, as well as by as many more members of the Forces as I could get into touch with. They all agree that our proposal represents a broad and generous discharge of the obligations which we incurred to the soldiers at the time these bonds were originally issued. I hope that when the

£16,000,000 worth of bonds has been redeemed we shall be in a position to redeem still more of them should the occasion require it. I hope, however, that very little more will be asked for by the soldiers before the maturity of the bonds, because I profoundly believe that those who hang on to them will, in the end, be both proud and glad that they did so.

ADJOURNMENT (Formal).

WAR PENSIONS.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER. — I have received from the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton) an intimation that he desires to move the adjournment of the House to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz.:—"The unsatisfactory administration of the Repatriation Department in regard to war pensions and other allowances to returned soldiers and their dependants."

Five honorable members having risen in their places,

Question proposed.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [2.55].—

In the early part of the session I took action with a view to bringing under the notice of the Minister for Repatriation the position in regard to war pensions and other allowances which are administered under the Repatriation Act. Since then no improvement has taken place. I would have included in my motion the question of the administration of War Service Homes, but for the fact that in connexion with that administration in New South Wales, a report is to be placed upon the table of the House in the near future. Upon that account I refrained from the action which I had contemplated. The matter which forms the subject of this motion is one of considerable importance, because it affects a very large section of those men who were in the fighting-line, and who, when leaving Australia, were promised that ample provision would be made for them in the event of their suffering any disability, either of a permanent or a temporary character. Yet, to-day we find that there are hundreds of complaints from returned men who are partially, or in some cases wholly incapacitated, because their pensions have either been reduced or discontinued. I remember reading the debate which took

place in this chamber when the Repatriation Bill was under consideration. Upon that occasion it was pointed out by honorable members upon this side of the House, and particularly by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Tudor), that the transfer of war pensions from the Old-age Pensions Department to the Repatriation Department would prove very unsatisfactory to the soldiers themselves. I also recollect the honorable member for Hume (Mr. Parker Moloney) moving to recommit that measure for the purpose of reconsidering this phase of the question. His motion was defeated by only nine votes, clearly demonstrating that at that time there was not a very large majority in this chamber in favour of transferring war pensions from the Old-age Pensions to the Repatriation Department. Since then it has been amply proved that the transfer was a mistake. The change has in no way reduced the cost of administration. As a matter of fact, the administrative costs under the Repatriation Department are greater than they were under the Old-age Pensions Department. In the latter Department we had officers who, by reason of long experience, knew exactly how to handle the claims of applicants for pensions. These officers were also very sympathetic with the claimants. They understood precisely how to deal with old people and with our soldiers. When the war pensions were transferred to the Repatriation Department a considerably increased staff had to be employed.

Mr. BOWDEN.—That transfer was made at the request of the soldiers themselves.

Mr. CHARLTON.—That may be so. I am altogether dissatisfied with the way in which the clerical work of the Repatriation Department is performed. Most honorable members have a large correspondence with that Department in connexion with these matters, and my own experience is that when it forwards replies to my communications it frequently omits to name the township in which the particular applicant concerned resides. I have, therefore, either to keep a complete list of the names of the applicants who are communicating with me, or else to request the Department to forward me the address of the particular applicant whose claim is the subject of

a departmental letter. One would naturally expect that the Department upon receipt of such a communication would immediately forward the address of the soldier in question. But instead of doing so it merely sends a formal acknowledgment of the request with an intimation that the matter will be given consideration. Then, probably in three or four weeks time, another letter from the Department will come to hand. Upon the last occasion that this matter was discussed, we were told that the House had taken away from the Government the power to deal with this particular Board.

MR. RODGERS.—Now, what does the honorable member mean by that statement?

MR. CHARLTON.—The Minister said, in effect, that he could not very well interfere with the administration of the Commission.

MR. RODGERS.—The honorable member has raised a point which is so important that he should be definite on the question of the powers to which he refers.

MR. CHARLTON.—I shall endeavour to prove that, in the Act, there is ample power invested in the Minister to deal with the Commission, or with any of the Boards acting under it. Sub-section 1 of section 7 of Act No. 6 of 1920 states—

For the purposes of this Act there shall be a Repatriation Commission, which shall, subject to the control of the Minister, be charged with the general administration of this Act.

This is definite. It was intended, and was made clear, by this Parliament that the Commission, upon appointment, should be subject to the control of the Minister. After provision had been made for the creation of the Commission, Parliament decided, according to sub-section 1 of section 13, that—

There shall be a Repatriation Board for each State, to consist of three members.

It is the State Board which is making the mischief.

MR. RODGERS.—Will the honorable member proceed to quote sections 26 and 27?

MR. CHARLTON.—It is my intention to do so. I emphasize that it is the State Board which is causing the trouble. Instead of following the lines laid down by the Pensions Board—so permitting local

medical men, or medical officers appointed by the Government in various districts, to make periodical examinations in order to ascertain the state of a recipient's incapacity—the New South Wales State Board appointed a medical officer from Sydney. Here is where the mischief comes in. He goes out into the country and examines various former soldiers who have been in receipt of pensions. He makes his investigations, asks such questions as he may deem necessary, comes to certain conclusions, and testifies thereon that So-and-so is now only two-thirds, or one-third, incapacitated, and that his pension should be accordingly adjusted.

MR. BOWDEN.—And very often his decision is against the advice of the local medical man who has been attending the returned soldier throughout.

MR. CHARLTON.—That is nearly always the case. The only construction I can put upon the consistent way in which these reports go against the views of the regular medical attendants is that the officer from Sydney desires to justify his appointment by the actual amount of saving which he is able to make for the Commission in respect of pensions paid.

Section 26 reads—

(1) Each Board shall be charged with the duties of—

- (a) determining whether the death or incapacity of a member of the Forces in fact resulted from an occurrence happening during the period he was a member of the Forces, and, in the case of incapacity, the nature and extent thereof;
- (b) determining whether the death or incapacity of a person enlisted or appointed for service in connexion with naval or military preparations or operations in fact resulted from his employment in connexion with those preparations or operations;
- (c) determining the extent to which persons alleged to be dependent upon a member of the Forces were in fact so dependent; and
- (d) assessing the rates of pensions of members of the Forces and their dependants, and determining the dates of the commencement of such pensions.

(2) The Commission may at any time direct that any particular case or cases of a particular class be referred to it for assessment or determination.

The wording of the section testifies beyond doubt that when this Parliament was dealing with the subject of pensions

it sought to make the whole matter as clear as possible for the guidance and assistance of the administering body. Rather than that it might be said that the Act was in any way ambiguous, Parliament deliberately inserted the words—resulted from an occurrence happening during the period he was a member of the Forces, and, in the case of incapacity, the nature and extent thereof.

When previously addressing myself to this subject, the Minister desired me to bring forward particulars of specific cases. I did so, and I wish to add now that of those which I indicated one has been settled satisfactorily. The person concerned has been paid right back, and in full. In connexion with others, however, the State Board has refused to reverse its earlier decisions. I wish to draw attention again to the case of a man named Schubert. The Board has intimated that it cannot see its way clear to alter its former decision, because—in effect—the man was for four months in camp in Australia and only a little more than one day in the trenches in France, after which he became afflicted with gout. The Board added that it is plain that such affliction was not occasioned by the man's participation in war-like operations. The comment is attached that Schubert received the same kind of food while he was in camp in England as he would have had if he had been at home. His pension has been taken away, although he cannot work and has a family to keep. Does the section say that before a soldier may become the recipient of a pension he must have been struck down by a bullet or by a shell fragment? I repeat that it is framed in most definite language: "an occurrence happening during the period he was a member of the Forces." Let me put it that I am eligible, and that I have offered my services. I am examined by the official medical officers and am passed. That is to say, I am presumed to be fit for active service abroad. If, after having passed the medical test, and having gone into camp, I develop some ailment and am unable by reason thereof to go overseas, and, following my discharge, I am unable to take up my usual employment, is my family to starve? Am I not entitled to say that—from whatever cause, known or unknown

Mr. Charlton.

—my disability occurred after I had offered myself and had been accepted by my country for service in its behalf? Does not section 26 most clearly and specifically cover such a case, and the case of Schubert also? This man actually went to England and France. He reached the trenches.

Mr. RODGERS.—In the class of case to which the honorable member refers, it cannot be said that the ailment is the outcome of a month or two spent in camp. Gout is a long standing complaint.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Even if I were to admit that the trouble might have been of long standing, that would not absolve the Government. The very fact of the Government's responsible medical examiners having accepted this man Schubert as fit, added to the circumstance that he had been able to go about his ordinary employment right up to the moment of his enlistment, and so had been able to support his family, throws a positive obligation upon the country that he and his family shall not suffer.

Mr. FOLEY.—The medical examiners should never have passed him.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Maybe so; but that is an entirely different matter. Once a man has been accepted, the Government must take the responsibility for his care; it is an inescapable obligation, and it was never intended that the definite terms of the Act should, or could, be so twisted as to render the Government free of liability. I guarantee that if a vote of the people were taken the unanimous answer would be that, after a man had offered his services, and had been accepted, if any hurt or ailment accrued, his care and support should become the nation's obligation.

I have still another case, that of a man named Amos, who is married and has five children. He has informed me that it is impossible for him to do a day's work; and it is a fact, I understand, that he has not done a day's work since his return. He was at one stage in receipt of the full pension, but the medical officer sent up from Sydney examined him and certified to the Board that he was not totally incapacitated. He is now regarded, therefore, as being only two-thirds incapacitated, and his pension has

been proportionately reduced. Seeing that the man cannot work, it is self-evident that he is totally incapacitated. While he was just as fully incapacitated as he is to-day, Amos was receiving the full pension. I appealed to the Board to review its decision, but have been informed that it is not able to see any reason to make an alteration. I wish to refer now to the case of a man named Taylor. The following letter from the chairman of the Repatriation Commission, addressed to myself, and dated 24th May, 1921, gives the particulars—

William R. Taylor, 2426, Private, 36th Battalion.

With reference to your representations to the Acting Minister regarding the case of the above-named, I have to inform you that careful consideration has been given to this case by the Commission, and, in view of the medical evidence, it cannot be considered that his incapacity is the result of, or was aggravated by, his military service. His service record shows that a fortnight after he disembarked in England he was admitted to hospital, and he was almost continuously in hospital up to the time of embarkation to Australia. Moreover, according to his own admission, his condition was pre-existent. Under the circumstances, he was liberally treated in having been paid pension of one-half of the maximum rate from 15th July, 1917, to 27th January, 1921, and the Commission regrets it cannot approve of continuation of payment.

In this case it is said that the applicant admitted that the complaint was pre-existent; but if the man was affected when he was accepted and went overseas, his illness became more acute, and, as he cannot now work, there is no justification for the Government breaking away from the promises made. We said at the outbreak of war that if the manhood of our community came forward and enlisted we would stand by them; but now, on the least possible pretext, the Government are endeavouring to get away from their obligations. I admit there may be malingerers, and if there are some who are deliberately endeavouring to obtain a pension on false pretences, they should be dealt with, because they should not take advantage of the concessions which the Government are providing for men who have actually been disabled. If men are able to work they should be prepared to do so; but, on the other hand, if some are incapacitated, or partially so, as the result of war service, and they were passed by the medical examiner, the obligation of

attending to them until restored to health is resting upon this Parliament.

Another case has been brought under my notice, but as the person concerned is in the electorate of the honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Fleming), I forwarded the communication to him for attention. I am mentioning the matter, however, so that honorable members may be aware of the position. The man, who is named Skillicorn, is a miner by occupation, and states that on his return from the war he was granted a pension. Like an honorable man, when he had recovered sufficiently, he notified the authorities that he was able to resume his occupation, and requested them to discontinue his pension. A short time after he had resumed employment his old complaint returned, and he was as bad as ever, with the result that it was impossible for him to work. He found that the trouble which arose at the war had returned, and he applied to the Board for a renewal of the pension, but it absolutely refused to grant it.

Mr. RODGERS.—On what grounds?

Mr. CHARLTON.—I cannot say at the moment, as the communication has been handed over to the honorable member for Robertson. If a man who has been temporarily incapacitated feels that he can return to work, but later finds that he can no longer do so, his pension should be restored.

Mr. RODGERS.—There is always the right to review the restoration, increase, or reduction of a pension.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I know that, because it is provided in the Act. The law provides that there can be an appeal from a State Board to the Commission, but in the cases I have mentioned, with the exception of one, the complaint is that the Board did not even send the complaint to the Commission. It decided the matter.

Mr. RODGERS.—What cases are those?

Mr. CHARLTON.—Those of Schubert and Amos. My complaint is that the State Boards do not send the complaints to the Commission, and the Minister is not in a position to be conversant with the facts. I am not in any way blaming the Minister, because I know of no man who has worked harder in the interests of the soldiers than he has. The Minister, however, will have to take control of this matter in order to see that his officers carry out the intentions of this Parliament.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—He has a very bad lot of officers.

Mr. CHARLTON.—That is just it.

Mr. RODGERS.—I will not admit that.

Mr. CHARLTON.—The mistake has been in appointing men who have seen active service to high administrative positions who are incapable of carrying out the responsible work of the Department.

Mr. McGRATH.—Has the Minister directed the Commission to reduce pensions?

Mr. RODGERS.—I would like to answer that interjection. There has been no direction from the Government or from the Minister for the Commission to reduce pensions.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Men who are at present holding high administrative positions are totally unfitted for the work. It may be reasonable to employ returned soldiers for secretarial and clerical work; but at the head of such an important Department there must be highly qualified men, otherwise large sums of public money will be wasted.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Why was any alteration made? Under the old system, everything proceeded smoothly, and there were no complaints.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Yes; I would like to know why a change was made, because returned men are not getting as much sympathy from the officials who were members of the oversea Forces as they did from the officers who were previously conducting the work.

Mr. BOWDEN.—They are dealing with them like a military corps.

Mr. CHARLTON.—That is so. In order to show honorable members how this matter affects returned soldiers, I shall read a letter from the Maitland and District sub-branch of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia, dated 21st May, 1921. It reads:—

My Committee desire me to convey to you their appreciation of your very fine efforts in the House of Representatives on the question of pensions. We feel sure that you are sincere in your efforts for the betterment of our disabled comrades and relatives, and hope that you are granted the health to pursue this question to a successful issue—

This is what I wish to direct particular attention to—

It is very hard, indeed, to have the fact brought home to us in such a dastardly manner that we are so soon forgotten, but very pleasant, on the other hand, to know that we

still have friends who are not afraid to champion the rights we fought so hard for. We have some very distressing cases in our district, whose British pride alone keeps them from publicity, and we can only wait and hope that such cases will soon benefit by the result of your excellent efforts.

That is a communication from a representative of the returned soldiers. These men opposed me at the last election; but I am fighting for what I think are their rights. During the great crisis in 1914 and the following years, when men were being asked to go to the Front, we offered every inducement to those who were prepared to volunteer by saying that we would stand by them and see that their interests were protected. We said that they should not want as a result of their patriotism; but, although the war has only been over for two and a half years, the returned soldiers are beginning to realize that they are almost forgotten.

Mr. GABB.—History is repeating itself.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Yes, and I am endeavouring to prevent it. I want honorable members who made promises to our fighting men to abide by them. I made promises in this Chamber in common with other honorable members, and I am going to see that they are carried out. I sincerely regret that there is a tendency to forget these men who did so much for us during that trying period. It does not reflect to our credit when we realize what is actually occurring. Even to-day we hear much of patriotism and the freedom we enjoy under the British flag, but the very men who have been prating about their loyalty are not prepared to stand behind the soldiers who went forth to preserve our liberty. On every hand inducement was offered to men to go to the Front, but now it seems that their noble efforts are to be forgotten. The men are beginning to see the true position, and it is up to this Parliament to do something to rectify their wrongs. We can only create loyalty by making the masses contented and happy, but that result will not be achieved if we are constantly taking advantage of those who sacrificed so much for our liberty. We told them that they would have to endure hardships, but that when they returned it would be our duty to see that their wants were provided for. Are we to ignore our promises? I trust this House

will do its duty, and that the Minister will take the whole matter in hand. I do not wish him to send these complaints on to the Commission, but to personally investigate them, and set up some standard for future guidance. It is the duty of the Minister to let the State Boards and the Commission know that this House will not allow them to take advantage of the soldiers simply because they were not struck by a bullet or shrapnel. If men were accepted for service, and are now unable to follow their usual occupation they should be provided for. There are some instances in which men who are performing light work are receiving one-half or two-thirds of what they did previously. In any case in which a man is unable to do any work, he should be given the full pension. I ask the Minister to give this matter his very serious consideration. I hope that he will give the Commission and the State Boards to understand that Parliament is deeply concerned with the interests of the soldiers, and expects them to administer the Act which it passed, and that unless they do so they must give way to persons more competent to carry out the job.

MR. BLUNDELL (Adelaide) [3.21].—I have much pleasure in supporting the motion moved by the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton). I believe that honorable members generally are agreed that the present method of administering pensions is absolutely unsatisfactory. As one of those who voted for the appointment of the new Commission to deal with pensions, I want to say that, if I had the opportunity to-day, I should be very pleased to put the members of the present Commission out of office, and to restore the administration of these pensions to those who previously carried out the work. It really appears to me as if the majority of the present Commission seem to think that it is their duty to cut down every pension they can, with a view to saving money, and without consideration for the rights and justice of the cases of different individuals.

MR. RODGERS.—I do not think that that is a fair statement to make.

MR. BLUNDELL.—I am afraid that I must adhere to that statement, because I intend to bring under notice one or two

cases in which the action taken by the Commission seems to indicate that they must have had some consideration of the kind in mind. I wish to refer to some of the "T B" cases of men in different sanatoriums. I refer, first of all, to the case of James F. Cooke. This man enlisted and went to France. While at the Front, he was sent into hospital, and it was discovered that he had this fearful disease of tuberculosis, and he was sent back to Australia. He was put into a sanatorium, and it was there recognised that he was entitled to a pension. His health improved, and he was allowed to leave the sanatorium. His pension was continued for a time after he left the sanatorium, and then it was suddenly reduced, and he was granted £1 per week. The reason given for reducing his pension was that he had suffered—and this was admitted—from what is medically termed empyema. This really means an abscess on the lungs, for which an operation is performed, the pus is let out, and the abscess removed, but a scar is left on the body. Every one conducting a medical examination of the man must have seen this scar, and, by making inquiries, could have found out the cause of it. However, the man was passed as medically fit, and went to the Front.

MR. LAZZARINI.—They wanted men then.

DR. EARLE PAGE.—He might be quite all right, and fit to go.

MR. BLUNDELL.—I do not doubt that. He was passed by the medical officer as fit for active service, but now, apparently, because of the operation of which the scar is evidence, this man's pension has been cut down to £1. This is given as a sort of act of grace, and this man suffering from this awful disease, which requires all the nourishment he can get, is now asked to exist on £1 per week. It is an absolute scandal upon this Parliament and upon every one responsible for the work of repatriation that men should be treated in this way. Like others similarly afflicted, this man is trying to keep life in his body as long as he can, and he is confronted with the knowledge that his inability to obtain sufficient nourishment reduces his chance of living. I shall read a letter received from the medical officer of the Bedford

Park Sanatorium in connexion with this particular case. It is dated 26th February, 1921, and is as follows:—

Mr. J. P. Cooke is suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, and his present condition is due to war service.

The empyema for which he was operated upon may or may not have been tuberculosis. The empyema operation scar was visible at all examinations, and the man must have been in good condition to justify the medical officers accepting him for active service in spite of the history of empyema, about which, so Cooke tells me, special inquiries were made.

I shall not read the whole of the letter, but it goes on to say that this man might have gone through the war. He was perfectly fit for active service, which bears out what the honorable member for Cowper (Dr. Earle Page) has said. The operation performed upon him did not necessarily prevent him being a strong, healthy man, and as Dr. Hayward, the writer of the letter, says, any medical man examining him must have noticed the evidence that he had been operated upon. He was passed by the medical officer in spite of this. There was no attempt to deceive the medical officer when the man submitted himself to examination, and yet, after all this time, we say to him, "You can live as best you can on £1 per week. That is all that your country is prepared to do for you."

I wish to refer now to another case. I shall not mention the name, because another honorable member is dealing with the case, and the only point I desire to mention in connexion with it is that Mr. A. H. Teece, a member of the Repatriation Commission, was approached by the Returned Soldiers' Association of South Australia in connexion with it, and made the following statement in reply:—

Where the Repatriation Department alleged that a disability was existent before the war, and the pensioner claimed that it was not, the onus of proving otherwise rested with the Department.

In this case, the man has been able to produce doctors' certificates and other evidence necessary to prove that there was not a suspicion that he had suffered from this complaint or was likely to suffer from it. After receiving a pension for a short time this man is left to-day with absolutely nothing, although he is suffering from this awful disease.

Mr. Blundell.

Mr. RODGERS.—The honorable member will give me particulars of these cases.

Mr. BLUNDELL.—I shall give the Minister particulars of all the cases to which I refer. I should like to say here that I join with the honorable member for Hunter in admitting that the Minister does what he possibly can. My complaint is that the cases to which I refer indicate that there is some one outside more powerful than this Parliament in deciding questions of this sort, which should be decided by us. The lesson is that honorable members should, in future, be very chary about handing over to the control of any outside Commission or Board matters which should be left in the hands of Ministers who may be controlled by the Parliament.

Mr. FOLEY.—The honorable member could not expect the Minister to deal with every case.

Mr. BLUNDELL.—No, but it would be very much more satisfactory if the administration of these matters were under his control. I have to refer to two other cases, those of Messrs. Shaw and Sinclair, which are somewhat similar to those to which I have already referred. It was not denied, in either of these cases, that the men, prior to being passed by the examining medical officer, had suffered years before, and there was a suspicion that they had suffered from this complaint. There is no suggestion that the medical officer was deceived or that the men attempted to deny the facts. He passed them as medically fit; they were enlisted, went through all the camps, and went away from Australia.

Mr. WATKINS.—And were cheered.

Mr. BLUNDELL.—Yes, and they were cheered. They came back, and to-day are suffering from this complaint; but the Commissioners say that they were suffering from it before they went to the war, and refuse to give them a pension. In effect, the Commissioners wipe their hands of these men, and leave them to live as best they can. When we were appealing to the able-bodied men of this community to enlist, every man who offered his services was cheered, as the honorable member for Newcastle (Mr. Watkins) has said, and men were allowed to leave for the Front only after competent medical officers had certified to their

fitness. The two men to whom I refer, in common with others who enlisted, were examined, not once, but on several occasions, and were submitted to a final examination just before they embarked. How, then, can it be said that they were suffering from tuberculosis before they went away? They received a pension for a little while after their return, and were then informed that it would no longer be payable to them. What is the reason for this treatment? Is it that the Commission are out to save money by treating returned soldiers in this scandalous manner, or is it because they have not a proper appreciation of what were the views of this Parliament in passing legislation with the object of doing the fair thing by our men who went to the Front?

I propose now to refer to the case of a man named Bromley, who does not come under the "T.B." category. He enlisted, was passed as fit, and went to the Front. While there he met with an accident, went into hospital, and ultimately was returned to Australia. On his discharge, he was given a pension, which, later on, was reduced, and finally was stopped on the ground that he was fit to follow his usual occupation. The actual facts are that as soon as Bromley was able, after his return, to get about, he was given employment at the Keswick Barracks. He was suffering from spinal trouble, and could not stoop; but the work allotted to him at the barracks did not involve any stooping, and he was able to carry on. While at the barracks he received a pension. Owing to the gradual reduction of work at the barracks, Bromley left, and got another job where he had to stoop. The consequence was that he was taken ill, and went into the Keswick Hospital. Before he went there, however, his pension had been stopped on the ground that he was able to follow his usual occupation. He remained in the hospital for months, and, although he is out to-day, he is told by medical men that he must always wear a spinal jacket, and on no account do any work which will involve his stooping. And yet the authorities say that he is fit to follow his usual occupation, and refuse to give him a pension.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—What is his usual occupation?

Mr. BLUNDELL.—He used to do labouring work, and those who certify

that a man in his state of health is able to do such work should be asked to have a try at it themselves.

Mr. RODGERS.—Has he appealed?

Mr. BLUNDELL.—Yes. He appealed locally, and his appeal, I think, has been sent on. He has a wife and two children, and another little one is expected. What are likely to be the feelings of a man who is treated in this way? Those responsible for such treatment have no compassion. Their sole object is apparently to cut off as many pensions as possible. They seem to think that by making reductions in this way they are carrying out their duty. I do not think they are, and will join with others in an effort to force these gentlemen to realize what the Parliament wants them to do in the direction of carrying out effectively the duty of Australia to those who fought for it.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. F. W. Bamford).—The honorable member's time has expired.

Mr. ANSTEY (Bourke) [3.37].—The Minister (Mr. Rodgers) said a few moments ago that I was one of the most favoured members of this House. As to that, I can only say that I realize that one can get nothing out of the Departments by running hostile to their official chiefs. If a man cannot get anything out of them when he has the influence of the Minister behind him, then there is absolutely no chance of obtaining redress. If honorable members generally get no more satisfaction from the Departments involved in this matter than I do—notwithstanding that the Minister says that I am one of the most favoured of members—then God help them! In my twenty years of parliamentary experience, I have not known a Department to show a more callous indifference to the requirements of members than that shown by the Departments dealing with war pensions and war gratuities. One can write letter after letter to them, get the support of the Minister, and yet not obtain a definite settlement. I have written to the Minister, obtained his support, received from him an acknowledgment of my letter, and a statement that it has been sent on to such-and-such a Department, but month after month has gone by without any definite settlement. That has frequently been

my experience. Here are two cases that are typical of dozens with which I have had to deal. The first relates to a man whose position is very much like that of the returned soldier to whom the honorable member for Adelaide (Mr. Blundell) has just referred. He was called up and asked why he did not enlist. He said he was not able to go to the Front; that he was physically unfit, inasmuch as he had an hereditary complaint. He was passed, however, as fit, went into camp, developed the complaint to which he had said he was liable, and asked to be paid off, but was kept there for nearly two years. He was finally paid off because he could not stand up. To-day that man is a derelict, living on the charity of his friends, and can get no relief from the Department. I agree with the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton) that the responsibility for the proper treatment of these men rests with the Government themselves. This man told the authorities that he had an hereditary complaint, but he was told to come up, was passed as medically fit, and sent into camp. I am concerned, not so much with the decisions arrived at by the Department from time to time in regard to various cases, but rather with the delay in dealing with matters submitted by honorable members. Surely when I address a letter to the Department, I am entitled to an answer. If I write to the Assistant Minister for Repatriation (Mr. Rodgers) in regard to a particular case I at once receive from him a letter to the effect that the case has been sent on to such-and-such an officer to be dealt with. But there the matter ends. I wait month after month, but hear nothing from the Department. Finally the man concerned comes to me and asks what I am doing in the matter. I reply, "I wrote to the Minister months ago, got an answer from him, and wrote to the Department, but no settlement of the case is forthcoming." Then I have to go through the whole procedure once again. The Department seems to absolutely ignore the cases submitted to it by honorable members. There is one more case, which is typical of dozens. A woman whose husband was killed at the war had adopted a child from a few weeks old, and she was told by an officer that if she complied with the conditions of legal adoption she could get a

Mr. Anstey.

pension for it. This the woman did, and was duly given a pension; but it was suddenly cut off, and no reason given. I wrote to the Minister on her behalf, and the case was sent on to the officials, and I received an acknowledgment of the receipt of my letter. But no reason was given even then for depriving this woman of her pension. Why are not definite answers given to communications of the kind? Apparently the Minister then forgot all about the case, but finally a letter came to say that the woman should inform the Department as to which officer it was who told her to legally adopt the child. How could the woman tell which officer it was? What does it matter who gave the woman that information? The fact remains that she complied with the conditions, and yet the pension is cut off. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, when an honorable member writes to the Minister about such matters there is no definite answer.

Mr. RODGERS.—The honorable member ought to say that he himself has had many cases put through.

Mr. ANSTEY.—I had one case put through, but it took months to handle.

Mr. RODGERS.—I shall give the honorable member a list of the cases he has had put through.

Mr. ANSTEY.—In any case, the people concerned get disgusted and annoyed.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—Why should a member have to go to the Minister? Why should these people not be able to do this business for themselves?

Mr. ANSTEY.—The honorable member has been long enough in Parliament to be able to answer that question himself. Only this morning a gentleman came to my door with a letter from the honorable member, in which "My dear Anstey" was informed that the honorable member had sent this man along, and hoped that Mr. Anstey would do all he possibly could for him. I have done so, and yet the honorable member asks a question like that! Some of these men and women have been writing to the Department for twelve months without receiving any answers. Under the circumstances, to whom can they go but their parliamentary representative, who, however, is equally unsuccessful in extracting anything definite? These people then give up the matter in despair; and what is the result? The member loses their votes; and what more important loss could there be? I can

only say that if I do not get some satisfaction—if, in reply to complaints, I continue to get the same old answers to the same old story from the same old crowd—I shall move the adjournment of the House every day of the week, and every week of the month.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN (Eden-Monaro) [3.44].—I asked the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) the question to which he refers because I maintain that these soldiers and soldiers' representatives should not have to appeal to members of Parliament in matters of the kind.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—What chance have they got if they do not appeal to members of Parliament?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—They have no chance; but such appeals ought to be unnecessary. I receive letters nearly every week complaining that, for reasons not given, pensions have been suddenly taken away. One man, who is a cripple, has five children to maintain, and yet his pension has been suddenly taken away. The Assistant Minister for Repatriation (Mr. Rodgers) may laugh, but if he were in the position of that cripple he would laugh "on the other side of his mouth." I have had a number of hard cases brought under my notice, and, in the absence of any satisfaction from the Department, I propose to move the adjournment of the House daily, devoting a day to each case. I do not accuse the Minister of not attending to my letters, because only last week he rectified a particularly deserving case that I placed before him. Nevertheless, it is a scandal that unfortunate widows, who are deprived of their pensions, have to write to me, or some other members, and ask them to move the Minister in order that they may get their rights. The present state of affairs shows that there is something wrong. Why are these pensions cut off? The other day a widow wrote to me to the effect that, after her husband was killed, she was given a pension of £2 per week; but early this year that pension was cut down to £1, and no reason given. There is no doubt that it is the system that is bad. I could now submit to the Minister half-a-dozen fresh cases which he could not refuse to consider.

Mr. CHARLTON.—There are hundreds of cases.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—That is so. Can the Minister not improve on the present system? Is he not aware of the present state of affairs?

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Let us bring about a crisis!

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—The weather is too cold for any crisis. The honorable member who interjects is jocular, but there is no man in the House who is more sympathetic with these unfortunate pensioners than himself; and surely if there is one section of the community to whom we owe consideration it is this. I have no hesitation in saying that there is not an honorable member who is not strongly of opinion that some change is necessary; and we ought to insist on something being done. We ought not to talk of creating a crisis. This is not a party question, and the Minister is thoroughly sympathetic, as we know from the efforts he made at the inception of the repatriation scheme. At the same time, there are unfortunate people who cannot obtain clothes and food for themselves and their children, although promised that they would be looked after, and they have been crippled and ruined by the war. I invite the Minister to look into matters for himself, and then inform the House that there is to be a change. I do not know that the officials in charge are unsympathetic, but, if not, they have a curious way of showing their sympathy. If these officials cannot efficiently carry out their duties, there are many men in the community ready and able to do so.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Let us revert to the old system, under which there was no trouble.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—Let us have some system other than the present one. Many people apply for and receive invalid and old-age pensions who are not entitled to them, and, at the same time, there are many deserving unfortunates who are unable to get pensions. The whole question of pensions ought to be tackled by the Government. Unless the Government give the old-age and invalid pensioners enough to keep body and soul together, something will have to be done which the Government will not find very pleasant. I have no desire to make any threats; but I urge the Minister, whose heart, I know, is in his job, to give the

people to whom I have been referring some satisfaction. Let us go back to the old system, or adopt any system but the present one, which is rotten and unsatisfactory all round.

Mr. WATKINS (Newcastle) [3.50].—I join with those honorable members who say that a considerable change has been noticeable since the alteration in the system of administering the pensions. I also indorse the statement that once a man was passed by the proper medical authorities and sent overseas, from that moment the Government accepted the fullest responsibility for his future welfare, whether the decision as to his medical fitness for service was right or wrong. No doubt other honorable members have received, as I have, numerous letters complaining of faulty administration of the Pensions Act, the frequent excuse for refusing to pension being that the injury received was not due to war-like operations. I may mention the case of a Gurkha, a steady, hard-working man, married to a white woman, and with a family of three children, whose injury the Department declared was not due to the war. As a matter of fact, that man had never had a day's illness in his life before he went to the Front. After being in the trenches for about six months, he was blown up one day and was injured in the abdomen by a piece of the falling timbers. Since then he has frequently been vomiting blood. Upon representations being made to the Department he was subsequently allowed a pension of 7s. 6d. per week and a few shillings for his wife and children. Whether his pension was reduced because he is a coloured man I cannot say, but, at all events, there was an admission that his injury was due to war-like operations, though he has been denied full pension rights. I may also quote the case of a man who had an injury to the knee of many years standing, but prior to the war it was practically all right, and he was passed for active service. As the result of excessive marching and hard work in the trenches, his knee gave way again, and it is now contended that as the injury had been sustained prior to the war, his claim for a pension cannot be entertained. I could recite case after case in a similar strain, and I have no

doubt that honorable members on both sides can do the same. I know of a consumptive boy who contracted the disease on active service, and for the last six months has been looking in vain for a convalescent home in New South Wales. I had a letter from him only this week stating that he was obliged to return to his own home because he could not get into a Government institution.

Mr. RODGERS.—I should like to say that no tubercular case which medical testimony states requires treatment is turned aside. If there is no accommodation in the town or city in which the patient lives, it will be found for him in some other town or city.

Mr. WATKINS.—Well, this boy has been unable to get treatment.

Mr. RODGERS.—I shall be glad if the honorable member will give me his name privately. I can assure him that the case will be attended to immediately.

Mr. WATKINS.—I know of another man who was injured during the war and whose pension has been stopped. He has a wife and three children, and he is now living in one of the war service homes. He has no income at all now, and does not know what is going to happen. On his behalf I have put in at least four or five independent medical certificates, including one from the doctor who passed him for active service. This man is now living on the charity of his neighbours.

Mr. RODGERS.—Do you know what reason was given for the rejection of his pension claim?

Mr. WATKINS.—The departmental reply stated that there was nothing wrong with him, and yet when he came to see me he was hobbling with the aid of a stick. I have here the particulars of another case, which I think should be placed on record, although I do not propose to give the writer's name. This man, in his letter to me, states—

I have taken the liberty to address this letter to you. I wish to state that, owing to my ill-health, I have had to return to Newcastle so as to be able to get my doctor's advice and treatment. . . . I sincerely hope that you will be speedily successful in regaining my pension, otherwise I do not know what is going to happen to my wife and baby. For myself, I do not care one iota, as my days are drawing to a close for the want of proper nourishment, which I cannot get. But while

I have strength to write, I shall fight for my rights. I met by accident the doctor who passed me for the Army yesterday, in the course of getting treatment, and he was quite surprised at my condition. I told him that the Department had suddenly discovered that I suffered from this disease before enlistment, and he said that he could swear against that, as I was in perfect health at that time; and I can produce the evidence of our old family doctor, also. My grandmother lived to 85, grandfather 82, my father is now living in good health at 67, and also my mother at 63, and so I cannot see how this decision was arrived at. But God made no man perfect. Even the judges on the Repatriation Board are likely to make a misjudgment, as they have surely done in my case.

This man is in the last throes of his disease, and yet he has been declared by the Repatriation Department not to be suffering sufficiently to justify a pension. When he enlisted for service overseas, none of these trifling, straw-splitting questions were asked of him.

MR. JAMES PAGE.—He must have been medically fit, otherwise he could not have gone.

MR. WATKINS.—Of course he was. When this man, and all the others who were invited to enlist for war service, came forward, they were told that certain things would be done for them in the event of any injury, and for their relatives in the event of their death on war service. Unfortunately, those promises are not being honoured, and I say it is time the Government took definite action in regard to all these claims.

DR. EARLE PAGE (Cowper) [3.59].—

I rise to support the motion that has been submitted by the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton). Though I do not wish to repeat the instances given by honorable members who have already spoken, of soldiers injured on war service not being sympathetically treated, I desire to point out that this lack of sympathy and consideration for returned soldiers is not confined to the Pensions Department. It seems to be general through the whole administration of the Repatriation Department; and with other honorable members who have spoken, I think it is time the Government took drastic action to remedy the present state of affairs. Things have come to such a pass that it is an absolute scandal in every direction. Honorable members are being inundated with letters from returned soldiers, or widows of deceased soldiers,

in connexion with their claims for pension privileges. They say that they are being starved of the amount of pension due to them, and which this House considered they were entitled to receive. On the other hand we have evidence that the small saving made by interfering with the comfort of these people, who deserve our best sympathy and proper treatment, is wasted in other directions. When I had the opportunity of speaking a week ago in regard to the assets that would remain to the Commonwealth in connexion with the expenditure incurred in building war service homes and settling soldiers on the land, I was asked to give definite instances of actual waste, the cause of which is exactly the cause of the trouble in regard to pensions, and that is lack of proper organization. Undoubtedly if the administration of war pensions had been left in the hands of the Department which had been accustomed for many years to deal with pensions, the results would have been much more satisfactory. In the same way if the building of war service homes had been left to people who had been building homes for workers in the various States we would not have had the evidence of waste that confronts us to-day. I want to point out the lack of sympathy displayed towards soldiers who desire to obtain homes for themselves, and to urge that the Minister (Mr. Rodgers) should seize the earliest opportunity of effecting a complete change in the whole method of the administration of the War Service Homes Department. Indeed, the opportunity presents itself now by reason of the fact that there is no War Service Homes Commissioner. The Minister told us, in speaking on this subject last week, that about £10,000,000 had been spent on the building of these homes, but when we examine the way in which the money has been spent, and the return from the expenditure, we are met with evidence such as appears in a paragraph in this morning's press, informing us that of fifteen houses built at Maryborough, Queensland, by the War Service Homes Commissioner eight are not utilized by soldiers, but are let to others.

MR. HECTOR LAMOND.—At the same time assistance is refused to men who have found houses already erected.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—Yes; that is another instance of the absence of sympathy. The same thing occurs in regard to the man who, having purchased a home, finds that the demands of his occupation necessitate his removal to a distant part, and is unable to effect a transfer of his property to another person who is anxious to buy it, but cannot do so because he is unable to present an eligibility certificate.

Mr. RODGERS.—I do not wish to interpose, but on this debate I will not be able to answer the points now being raised by the honorable member. He will see that it is hardly fair on his part to deal with war service homes questions on a motion dealing with war pensions. However, I will afford him an early opportunity of dealing with the other matter.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—If the Minister will afford me another opportunity of dealing with the matter of war service homes I shall defer my remarks, except to say that definite instructions ought to be given to the Commissioner or Acting Commissioner that he must not have a kind of law of the Medes and Persians dealing with the matter, and should expedite the issue of certificates of eligibility so that the building of homes may be proceeded with.

Mr. RODGERS.—I have already given a direction that the fact that homes cannot be built is not a sufficient reason for stopping the issue of eligibility certificates.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—I am pleased to hear that assurance. Pending a statement by the Minister, and a full discussion of the matter, I hope the office of War Service Homes Commissioner will not be filled permanently.

Mr. RODGERS.—Before an appointment is made the House will have an opportunity of considering the complete scheme of reorganization.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—I hope that the Minister will not follow the example of others, and keep men in acting positions for years.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—I indorse that interjection. Honorable members should not have placed before them week after week specific instances of men and women who have been harshly dealt with, instead

of being treated with the utmost courtesy and consideration.

Mr. LISTER (Corio) [4.6].—I think the House will at once remove any stigma from the shoulders of the Assistant Minister for Repatriation (Mr. Rodgers) in regard to the administration of the War Pensions Act, because it is generally accepted that he is heart and soul in his desire to do the right thing to returned soldiers. In any case he cannot be expected to be responsible for the individual cases which arise every day as the result of inefficient administration.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Then why was not the administration of war pensions left in the hands of those who had been administering them efficiently?

Mr. LISTER.—It was the desire of the representatives of the returned soldiers that the transfer should be made.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—It is their desire now to get the control of war pensions out of the hands of the Repatriation Commission.

Mr. LISTER.—People always gain by experience. We, on this side of the House, do not profess to be perfect. But I have risen particularly to refer to one or two instances of inefficient administration. Members could speak for hours on the general disorganization of the Department without making any progress; but as we are constantly being invited, when discussing grievances of this nature, to bring specific cases under the notice of the Minister, I shall direct his attention briefly to two. A soldier, who had had considerable service overseas, returned suffering from heart trouble, shell-shock, and fits. In the Caulfield Hospital he was subject to frequent fits, but was discharged from the institution without a pension. When he made a claim for pension rights, the generous Pensions Department opened their hearts to the extent of giving him a miserable 10s. per week for himself, a wife, and two children, although he was totally unfitted to follow his pre-war occupation. Another case is mentioned by a lady who wrote to me on the 14th May from a place in the Corio electorate. I do not mention her name, because it is not fair to persons who write in this way that their distress should be advertised. I have here the case of a soldier's widow, who was for a time receiving £5 9s. per

fortnight in pension and allowances, but, under the new regulation, which has been administered very drastically of late, she gets only 27s. 6d. per week, or £2 15s. a fortnight. In a letter that I received from her this afternoon, she thanks me for the interest I have taken in her affairs, and tells me that her husband died of pneumonic influenza after being sent back from overseas as medically unfit, and she goes on to say that unless the Department comes to her assistance, the home, or, as she terms it, the hut, built for her by her deceased soldier husband must be sacrificed. She cannot keep the wolf from the door, feeding and clothing herself and her children on the miserable pittance she gets from the Department. I may be chided by the Minister for having mentioned this case before taking it to him, but complaints of this kind are general among honorable members. There should be no need to go to the Minister with these grievances. What is needed is sympathetic administration, and the sooner the work is intrusted to persons having a little of the milk of human kindness in their composition, the better it will be for those whose cause we champion.

Time allowed for the discussion of the motion extended to 5.15 p.m.

Mr. McGRATH (Ballarat) [4.15].—I join with other honorable members in voicing discontent and dissatisfaction with the administration of the Repatriation Department. The Minister is sympathetic, but, unfortunately, he puts too much reliance on certain officials, and, apparently, takes their word for everything. I acknowledge that in several cases I have got satisfaction from him, but in others there has been considerable delay, and, in one instance, nothing has yet been done. In this last case, an unfortunate soldier was drawing the full pension for a little while, and was suddenly deprived of it. Within a fortnight he claimed an invalid pension. Honorable members know how difficult it is to obtain that pension, unless the applicant is absolutely incapacitated.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—It should be much easier to get a war pension.

Mr. McGRATH.—Yes. This man has a wife and five children. He appealed to the Department, but it was three months before his first letter was answered, and for that time he and his family were

starving. I then wrote to the Minister, and got from him an immediate reply; but there was a further delay of three weeks. Finally the man was told that he was suffering from a pre-war injury, and was not entitled to a war pension. Now, those who volunteered for active service had to undergo a stiff medical examination, not once, but a number of times, and there was a final examination just previous to sailing. This man must have been in pretty good health to be accepted by the authorities. I do not know whether he went beyond England, but he was certified to by the doctors in Victoria as medically fit when he left Australia. Had he been suffering from any complaint previous to enlistment, the doctors who examined him should have discovered that fact. This man was willing to do his bit, and, of course, if he had suffered from rheumatism prior to enlistment, the trouble would have become worse in camp here, and would have been further increased by the life on board ship. But the man was accepted as fit, and no doctor can now say definitely that he had rheumatism before he enlisted. A doctor can merely guess at what may have been the original state of things. There seems a desire on the part of some doctors to cut down the war pensions as much as they can. I asked by interjection a little while ago if the Minister had instructed the doctors to do this, and he said that no such instruction had been given.

Mr. RODGERS.—I now repeat that statement.

Mr. McGRATH.—I accept the Minister's denial. Some of these doctors are exceeding their duty. I know of a case in which a soldier who was getting 42s. a week had his pension reduced to 28s. a week on the word of a lady doctor, practically without examination. She said to him that pensions would be a thing of the past very shortly, as the Government could not afford to pay them.

Mr. RODGERS.—No one has any right to say that. I repudiate the statement.

Mr. McGRATH.—It was like the impudence of this lady doctor to make such a statement. I wrote to the Department about the matter, but they passed it over, and this doctor is still entitled to examine returned soldiers. No man cares to be examined by a lady doctor.

Mr. RODGERS.—Where is this doctor practising?

Mr. McGRATH.—In the Ballarat district. I do not know why the Department has appointed any lady doctor for this work. This lady's remark showed that she has little sympathy with returned men. Weeks have gone by, and they are still waiting for a further examination; but they will have to wait months unless definite action is taken with the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner of Repatriation. Not long ago the allowance of a Mrs. Young was reduced. She has a sickly daughter, who sometimes earns as much as 30s. a week, and she lost a boy in the war. The Department, in a letter to her, had the impudence to suggest that this girl could help to support the mother.

Mr. LISTER.—Unfortunately that sort of letter is too common.

Mr. McGRATH.—It was a callous suggestion to make. Another widow, Mrs. Lewis, who lost a boy in the war, had her allowance cut down. She gets a pension of 30s. a week, and 2s. 6d. for a girl of thirteen. A son of eighteen also lives with her, and the Department told her that it was the duty of this son to help to support his mother. He is a good son, but a boy of eighteen does not earn very much. It is all very well for an official who is being paid £1,500 a year to make these suggestions; but it should not be forgotten that we promised the soldiers who went away that their widows and mothers would be given a fair and square deal.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Probably in the cases referred to the lads who were killed did not, before they enlisted, contribute to the upkeep of their mothers' homes. That is made an excuse by the Department whenever possible.

Mr. McGRATH.—That is so. We made a grave mistake in the drafting of our Pensions Act; but the Act should be administered more sympathetically. Probably in this case the Department would say that, because the boy who was killed was not earning more than £1 a week at the time of his enlistment, he was worth only 15s. a week to his widowed mother, it being forgotten that had he not answered the call he would to-day be earning £4 or £5 a week, and be worth so much more to her. I hope the Minister will give consideration to these cases.

Now in regard to vocational training. A number of men who were being trained at the Ballarat School of Mines have been ordered to Melbourne. They are nearly all of them partly incapacitated, and most of them are married men. They are learning the trade of carpenters, and I believe that 90 per cent. of those trained for that work have proved efficient. Now, in order to centralize everything in Melbourne, these men are being ordered to Melbourne, almost at a moment's notice. They are to receive a miserable 25s. a week to maintain them while completing their training here. The Minister is surely opposed to this centralization policy.

Mr. RODGERS.—I have given the honorable member evidence of that.

Mr. McGRATH.—That is so. I appealed to the honorable gentleman in regard to a soldier who was ordered to Melbourne, and he countermanded the order. About nine returned men, who are buying homes in Ballarat on the instalment system, and who lived there before the war, and would, had they not volunteered for active service, be now in comfortable circumstances, are told to break up their homes, and go to Melbourne. The Deputy Commissioner has notified them that their sustenance allowance will cease on the 9th June unless they comply with this instruction. We have at Ballarat instructors as good as any in the metropolitan area.

Mr. RODGERS.—Is this being done on the recommendation of the Industrial Committee?

Mr. McGRATH.—Yes.

Mr. RODGERS.—Well, I think it is wrong.

Mr. McGRATH.—I think so, too. I hand to the Minister a copy of the *Ballarat Star*, which contains an account of a meeting held in the city last night to protest against the order that has been issued. I am sure that the Minister will, now that he has had the circumstances explained to him, veto it.

Mr. RODGERS.—You have at Ballarat, I understand, the organization and the training staff, and you have work for them to go to when they are efficient?

Mr. McGRATH.—We have. It was shown at the meeting last night that 95 per cent. of the men turned out from the local schools have proved efficient, and that they have made £5,000 worth of material which has

been sold for the benefit of the Repatriation Department. If the men cannot get at country centres training as good as is given in Melbourne, the Department should be prepared to make the small financial sacrifice involved in sending an instructor from Melbourne. I do not agree that the soldiers cannot get proper training at Ballarat. If, however, the Commissioner or the Industrial Training Committee puts that argument before the Minister, I hope he will order that an instructor be sent from Melbourne. I ask the Assistant Minister to have the fullest inquiry made into individual cases, and also to call the chiefs of the Department together and give them a lecture, telling them particularly to deal with appeals a little more readily than they are doing at present. When a man lodges an appeal against the amount of money paid to him the matter should be finalized within a fortnight. I feel sure that instruction from the Assistant Minister to the head of the Department and the doctors to be a little more sympathetic in their dealings with incapacitated soldiers will have a beneficial effect.

Mr. BELL (Darwin) [4.27].—As I know that there are other members who wish to speak in this debate my remarks will be brief. I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without making it clear to the Minister that I am quite in accord with the protest which has been voiced by the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton) and others who have spoken on this motion. It is astonishing to me that action similar to that which has been taken to-day has been necessary at least three times this session. I am surprised that the Assistant Minister has not been able to do something to, at any rate, modify the grievances that are constantly brought before him. The fact that protests have been made from every part of the House is proof that there are good grounds for complaint. Of course, the Assistant Minister realizes that honorable members are not animated by any desire to attack his administration; they have said that they have found him hard-working and full of sympathy for the soldiers. But the House cannot be satisfied with that. We must have a change quickly, for I am afraid no Government could survive for long attacks such as are being made on the administration of the

present Government in respect of soldiers. I rose to emphasize two matters in particular. I hold that the question of whether or not a man suffered incapacitation from warlike operations should not be considered when dealing with his claim for a pension. With other honorable members, I say that if, after a man was passed as medically fit for active service, he became incapacitated either in warlike operations or after his return from abroad, there should be no inquiry as to whether or not the trouble was existent prior to enlistment.

Mr. RODGERS.—Unfortunately, the law is not clear on that point.

Mr. BELL.—Possibly it is not, but the administration could be more sympathetic than it is. If the Assistant Minister agrees with the House generally that once a man has been accepted for war service the Government must shoulder their responsibility in regard to his incapacitation, I need say no more. These cases should be rectified at once, because they are the subject of general complaint, and I agree with the honorable member for Ballarat (Mr. McGrath) that no medical man can say definitely, in a large number of cases, whether or not the cause of incapacitation was pre-existent.

Another trouble arises in the determination of persons who may be considered dependent upon a deceased soldier. Other honorable members have mentioned that the claims of mothers of deceased soldiers for pensions have been refused because the soldiers had not been contributing towards the support of their mothers before they went to the war. The cases of these mothers are amongst the hardest of those dealt with by the Department.

Mr. GREGORY.—That interpretation was never intended when the Act was passed.

Mr. BELL.—One honorable member has already effectively argued that a young fellow who was, say, eighteen years of age when he enlisted would probably be earning very little, and his parents might not, at the time, need his help. Even though he was not contributing to the maintenance of his parents then, it is reasonable to suppose that he would be doing so if he were alive now and five or six years older than

when he enlisted. The provisions of the Act governing these claims should be administered more generously, and regardless of whether or not the deceased soldier was contributing towards the keep of his mother before he enlisted she should be entitled to a pension if she is in need of it.

In regard to the general question of pensions administration, I admit that I supported the Bill to place under the control of one Department all activities relating to soldiers. I thought that by this change soldiers' affairs would be administered more effectively and more economically. However, the responsibility for the change is immaterial; the fact remains that the administration of pensions by the Repatriation Department is not what it should be, and there is no reason why the evils complained of should not be corrected. In the first speech I made in this House I complained that certain soldiers were not receiving the pensions to which they were entitled, whilst other persons who were not entitled to pensions were receiving them. At that time war pensions were administered by the same Department as controlled old-age and invalid pensions, and even in those days we had ground for complaint. Shortly after the publication of that speech I received a letter from the Commissioner of Pensions asking me to cite cases in support of my allegations. I immediately cited the cases of several soldiers and dependants who had been refused pensions to which I considered they were entitled, and I am glad to say that in most cases adjustments were quickly made, and the persons concerned received their dues. The Commissioner then invited me to mention persons who were in receipt of pensions to which they were not entitled. I replied that I was not prepared to do that. I did not consider it my duty to tell the Department of parents who were drawing pensions although they were not in need of such assistance. I remember that one case that I brought before the Commissioner was that of the mother of a deceased soldier; he was eighteen and a half years of age when he went to the Front, and the mother was sixty-five years of age and the father seventy-one years of age. The mother was told by

the Department that she was not entitled to a pension because she was not dependent upon her son before he enlisted. As a matter of fact, the parents were assisting the lad to pay for his education, and it was unfair of the Department to raise the question of dependence. That was realized ultimately, and the mother received her pension. I hope that this is the last occasion upon which the House will require to take action to expose the 'administration of soldiers' pensions. I do not often make threats, because I realize that a threat must be carried out if the maker of it is to be respected. But I repeat that no Government can long withstand criticism such as has been hurled against the present Ministry on several occasions in regard to the administration of the Repatriation Department.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY (Hume) [4.38].—I have been requested by the Repatriation Committee at Wagga to bring before the House an extraordinary hard case. Having regard to the seriousness of this complaint, and in order that I may have more chance of having it dealt with effectively, I shall forgo the remarks I intended to make on other subjects and concentrate wholly upon it. Briefly, the facts are these: The woman concerned is living with her family of three or four children, the youngest of whom is a little girl aged about one year and ten months. This woman deserted her husband and family in the most callous fashion for another man, and when the war broke out two of her sons enlisted. One of them was killed at the Front, and after his death a question arose in regard to the allotment of his war gratuity. The woman applied for the payment of the gratuity to herself. The Repatriation League at Wagga took a very active part in endeavouring to secure its payment to the little girl, who was living upon the charity of a woman in the neighbourhood. The child's father had died in the meantime, so that she was practically an orphan, without any means of support. This matter was put before the Board, whose lack of sympathy I am wholly at a loss to understand, because when it was called upon to decide between the woman who had cruelly deserted this little girl

and the child herself, it decided in favour of the former. In opposition to all common sense and to all the dictates of humanity, it gave the war gratuity to the mother.

Mr. RODGERS.—I hope that the honorable member is not suggesting that the Repatriation Commission is in any way responsible for that?

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I have had the case before the Minister previously, and that is why I am referring to it now. The Wagga branch of the Repatriation Committee wrote me as follows:—

Herewith I hand you copies of correspondence which has passed in connexion with the application of—

I will not mention the girl's name—
for the war gratuity.

The letter then details the circumstances of the case, and proceeds—

In spite of the circumstances of the desertion of her child by the mother of this ex-soldier, leaving the little girl dependent upon the charity of neighbours, the War Gratuities Board have decided that the payment of the gratuity shall be made to the girl's mother. In the opinion of my Committee, it is a disgrace unequalled to make this payment to the mother, and leave the little girl still dependent upon the charity of a neighbour. I shall be glad if you will bring the matter forward.

I did as I was requested, and the last reply which I received reads—

Your favour of the 1st inst., advising that nothing can be done in connexion with this girl's application for the war gratuity in respect of her deceased brother, as her mother has already been paid the gratuity, is to hand. This information having been communicated to my Committee, I was requested to thank you for the assistance you gave in the matter, and to ask that you take an early opportunity of ventilating in the House this outrageous action on the part of those responsible for the distribution of the gratuity. This case is well known in the district, and it has caused widespread dissatisfaction and indignation that such a state of things is allowed.

I sympathize with the Minister for Repatriation, because he is surrounded by about the worst staff that he could get.

Mr. RODGERS.—I will not admit that.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I am speaking, not merely from my own experience, because it has been pointed out by others that it would be impossible for any Minister to conduct his Department satisfactorily while he is surrounded by persons who do not seem to be possessed

of that human sympathy which is so essential an element in matters of this character.

Mr. RODGERS.—I do not wish to interrupt the honorable member; but, although the circumstances of the case to which he has referred are very hard, may I ask him this question, "When is a mother not a mother"?

An HONORABLE MEMBER.—When she deserts her children.

Mr. RODGERS.—She is always the soldier's mother and his next-of-kin. Even though she may have deserted her husband and child, legally she is always the mother of her deceased son, and his next-of-kin.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Of course, I admit that. But if the law is so absolutely opposed to common sense, why continue to observe it? It is no answer for the Assistant Minister for Repatriation to tell me that the law is so-and-so. If the law is wrong, obviously it is our duty to amend it.

Mr. RODGERS.—The case quoted is a hard one, but the law is as I have stated.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Under the Act, has the Minister no discretion in a case of that kind?

Mr. RODGERS.—No. The law applies to the next-of-kin.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—But in this case, for all practical purposes, the next-of-kin is non-existent. This woman deserted her little child as if it did not belong to her. Yet we are told that we must abide by the law. In such circumstances, I say that the law is an ass, or something worse.

Mr. FOLEY.—The honorable member was a member of this Chamber when the War Gratuity Act was framed, and he should have seen to the matter then.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Foley) was not a member of this House at the time of which he speaks, and therefore I can forgive his statement, because he does not know what happened then. Upon that occasion, I submitted an amendment to the effect that the administration of war pensions should be allowed to remain with the Old-age Pensions Department. Had that amendment

been carried, none of this trouble would have arisen. Our war pensions were taken out of the hands of a sympathetic body and handed over to officers who are dealing with the claimants for those pensions most unsympathetically.

Mr. BLUNDELL.—Nobody anticipated that a case would arise such as that which the honorable member has related this afternoon.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That mother had no rights whatever.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Is there not such a word in the Ministerial vocabulary as "discretion?"

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Of course there is. If I occupied the position of the Minister, I would not have hesitated to take this matter into my own hands, and to prevent the war gratuity being paid to a woman who had no earthly right to it.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Parliament deliberately took that power out of the hands of the Minister.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—It did nothing of the kind. If it did, the majority of which the honorable member forms a part is responsible. I believe that the Minister has power to redress this grievance. If the Assistant Minister will take the matter into his own hands, with a view to doing this girl justice, I am quite satisfied that his action will receive the support both of this House and of the country.

Mr. FOLEY (Kalgoorlie) [4.51].—In reply to the honorable member who has just resumed his seat, I would point out that when the War Gratuity Act was under consideration this Parliament included in it a definition of the word "mother." It also provided in the most definite manner possible, that even if a man who had deserted his wife and family for years, lost upon active service a son whom he had perhaps scarcely ever seen, the Department must not acknowledge any claim to the gratuity on the part of the deceased's mother unless she first produced a properly signed waiver of his claim by the husband.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—That is not so.

Mr. FOLEY.—It is, and this Parliament must accept its responsibility for that position.

Mr. CHARLTON.—If the position is as the honorable member says it is, the sooner Parliament rectifies it the better.

Mr. FOLEY.—There are many cases of that kind. I have dealt with dozens of them.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—But finally, I think, the payment of the gratuity was left to the discretion of the Minister.

Mr. FOLEY.—No. I admit, however, that the Minister for Defence and the Minister for the Navy possess discretionary powers in regard to the settlement of the "other allowances" which are mentioned in the motion of the honorable member for Hunter. As a consequence, little or no trouble has been experienced in connexion with those allowances. In Western Australia there has scarcely been a complaint in regard to them. When this motion was launched by the honorable member for Hunter, he referred in a very gentlemanly way to the many persons who during the progress of the war had waved flags, and who generally indulged in a perfect frenzy of patriotism. He spoke also of the promises which were made to the men who enlisted. In Western Australia I took a prominent part in a recruiting campaign, and I frankly admit that from almost every platform I told the people that the best which we could give them was not too good for those who volunteered. I still hold that opinion. But there is no party in this House which has a monopoly of that view. There are just as loyal men on one side as on the other. I can only speak for my own State, but I am bound to say that the people of Western Australia, not only talked patriotically, but worked patriotically, with the result that they contributed £1,750,000—more than £3 10s. per head of the total population—to assist our returned soldiers. Until the Repatriation Commission took over the administration of pensions every case which came up for review, after an application had been refused, was passed on to me for investigation. I am not prepared to say that those who are administering pensions today are hard-hearted. Neither can I say that the medical officers with whom I have come into contact are at all callous.

As for these complaints regarding pensions, they are, after all, comparatively few.

Mr. CHARLTON.—There are hundreds, and probably thousands, in New South Wales. The honorable member cannot speak for that State.

Mr. FOLEY.—If the honorable member were to divide the total number of complainants into the grand total of those who enlisted from New South Wales he would see that the proportion is, as I have just said, very small.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY. — There are many who are suffering injustice who do not write to members of Parliament.

Mr. FOLEY.—No doubt; and, with respect to a great many cases, I am sorry that political influence has been brought to bear. It is not fair that one member of Parliament, who may have a strong political "pull," should be able to show that he can get things done, while others equally active in the interests of their constituents, and equally sympathetic towards returned men, cannot secure similar results. The honorable member for Ballarat (Mr. McGrath) remarked, with respect to review and investigation of cases of complaint, that they ought all to be settled within a fortnight. I assure him that that could not be done, since inquiries, one way or another, often take much longer. I recall an instance to show that particulars of cases, as they are made public in pursuance of a policy of criticising the pensions administration, will not always stand investigation. The circumstances of a certain family were taken up prominently by the press in my State, under such headings as, "Scandalous treatment of a soldier." It was my task to make inquiries, and I found that the family was getting £6 2s. 6d. from governmental sources. Yet, before leaving for the war, the head of that family had never earned so much per week. Every case has to be dealt with on its own peculiar merits. In my opinion, there should be a committee of review established in each State, or in each district among a number into which every State should be cut up. The task of such committees should be to investigate every case of complaint. Thus there would be brought about what honorable members desire. The committees should have the right of reference,

not only to the Commission, at headquarters, but to the Minister also. That would insure that every person got a fair deal.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [5.0].—I have only a few words to say in repetition of statements which I have already made about half-a-dozen times in this Chamber, but I wish to preface my remarks by saying that I do not condemn the departmental officials. Their duties are arduous, but they are doing well. Like other people, the Commissioners and members of the Boards are apt to make mistakes.

I have not heard a word to-day concerning one class of dependant who has suffered most heavily of all. I refer to the deserted families of men who are "A.W.L." Although I have frequently made known the hard circumstances of these unfortunate wives and children, I can secure no redress. I cannot even get anybody interested. There are probably hundreds of deserted dependants in Australia. These are not getting pensions of £2 a week. They receive nothing whatever. The heads of their families enlisted and left Australia, in many instances chiefly to evade and cast off for ever their family responsibilities. It is my intention to bring forward this complaint time and again, until, perhaps, some redress may be secured. Australia has a responsibility in respect of these deserted people, who, through no fault of their own, have lost their breadwinners, and are getting nothing by way of support from this country.

Mr. RODGERS (Wannon—Assistant Minister) [5.3].—I do not propose to make a general statement concerning the pension laws of Australia or traversing the provisions of the Act; but there are one or two matters which require specific reference. The honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton) stated that the responsibility for the administration of the Repatriation Act, and of pension matters generally, was cast upon the Government, and upon the Minister directly concerned. On behalf of the Government, I accept full responsibility for the policy laid down in the Act, and for the establishment by the Government of an administrative Commission. I may interpose here that pensions matters have now

reverted to the Minister for Repatriation (Senator E. D. Millen), while it will be my task to continue to administer the War Service Homes branch. The appointment of the Repatriation Commission was in response to a general demand on the part of the press, the public, and the soldiers' organizations, that the whole subject of pensions administration—both in regard to the actual assessment of pensions and to administration generally—should be removed from political control and vested in a Commission. The Government accepted that widely-expressed desire as a matter of policy, and thereto this Parliament assented. Sub-section 1 of section 7 of the Repatriation Act states—

For the purposes of this Act there shall be a Repatriation Commission, which shall, subject to the control of the Minister, be charged with the general administration of this Act.

Machinery is provided. First, there is a Central Commission for the assessment of pensions and for general administration. Then there are the State Boards. There is a medical organization, which consists of the principal departmental medical officer assisting the Central Administration, a departmental medical officer assisting each State Board, and an advisory Medical Board assisting the Commission generally. This Board consists of some of the most eminent men in the medical profession, and, when required, the services of the most highly-qualified specialists are called upon to deal with particular cases.

Mr. GABB.—And the decisions of these specialists are the deciding factors always.

Mr. RODGERS.—Not at all. They are called in to advise, but they have no power of awarding decisions. A pension is assessed after the examination of the complete medical records of a soldier abroad, and at home upon his discharge, and afterwards by personal examination by the departmental medical officer. The soldier has the right of appeal to the State Board, and a further right of appeal direct to the Commission, and the latter body has scope of reference to the highest medical authority in the land. I mention these details to show that the Government have provided machinery for the reasonable assessment of pensions,

and have fortified themselves and the Commission by power of reference to the best medical advice available. I wish to say here that, during the whole of the war period and since, the Government have been under a deep debt of gratitude to the Australian medical profession.

The gravamen of to-day's complaints is more against the law, as it stands, than against its administration. I remind honorable members of the duties cast upon the Commission. These are very heavy, and they cover a wide range. I have had close association with the three Commissioners for some months, and I can testify that they have earnestly endeavoured to fulfil their obligations to the country and to the soldiers individually, according to the terms in which their tasks are expressed in the Act itself. I call the particular attention of honorable members to the matters which the Commission and the State Boards are called upon to determine. They are set forth in section 25 as follow:—

(a) Determining whether the death or incapacity of a member of the Forces in fact resulted from an occurrence happening during the period he was a member of the Forces, and in the case of incapacity the nature and extent thereof;

(b) determining whether the death or incapacity of a person enlisted or appointed for service in connexion with naval or military preparations or operations in fact resulted from his employment in connexion with those preparations or operations;

(c) determining the extent to which persons alleged to be dependent upon a member of the Forces were in fact so dependent; and

(d) assessing the rates of pensions of members of the Forces and their dependants, and determining the dates of the commencement of such pensions.

I listened very attentively to the remarks of honorable members, and endeavoured to get a general idea of the opinions held concerning the administration of the Department which, in their judgment, is defective. In the majority of cases it seems that the whole burden of their effort was to place upon the Commission the responsibility for refusing to grant pensions to those with pre-existing complaints.

Mr. CHARLTON.—That is not so.

Mr. RODGERS.—I believe it is. Almost every honorable member who has

spoken to the motion has expressed the opinion that if a man was accepted for active service his fitness has been proved, and he should be entitled to a pension if incapacitated. I find in some instances that there is some justification for such a request, but honorable members must remember that that is not the law. If there was a pre-existent condition which has been aggravated by war service allowance is made for that aggravation; but a returned soldier is not granted a pension as a right because a pre-existent condition was not observed at the time of his enlistment. That is the chief cause of complaint against the administration. I have noted all the other cases mentioned, and I shall, as I did on a previous occasion when cases were submitted, pass them through the Department, and ask for an early decision.

Mr. CHARLTON.—There are hundreds of cases that we cannot bring here. If the Minister would allow some one to go through the file it would be of assistance. There are many others that may be more worthy of consideration than those mentioned.

Mr. RODGERS.—I do not think I can be charged with inactivity or lack of sympathy in the matter of pensions, because I have endeavoured to do my best in the interests of returned men, even if it involves working through day and night, as I have done for months past. I shall place these complaints before the Commission for the purposes of analysis, and direct that close investigation shall be given to the statements made to-day. I have been pressed in certain directions to agree to some of the requests, but to do so would mean amending our existing legislation. At present there are in existence 222,398 pensions, and to amend the law and alter the incidence of pensions would be a very serious matter, involving heavy financial obligations. I can, however, promise honorable members that every endeavour will be made to continue to sympathetically administer the Act, even if it means Ministerial intervention. At this juncture I cannot promise to introduce amending legislation, but I shall bring the points raised by honorable members before my colleagues with the idea of giving assistance.

Delay to the extent of months is altogether unjustifiable, but it must be remembered that the Department, which is a huge one, is called upon to deal with hundreds of thousands of cases. I shall ask the Commission to see that speedy and sympathetic consideration be given to all claims.

Debate interrupted under standing order
119.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT.

APPOINTMENT OF COMPTROLLER-GENERAL AND COLLECTORS.

Mr. JAMES PAGE asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

In view of the Minister's recent promise, will he say when he intends to appoint permanent collectors and a Comptroller-General?

Mr. GREENE.—Steps are being taken to fill the positions mentioned.

PUBLIC SERVICE SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Mr. BURCHELL asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce the Public Service Superannuation Bill this session, as promised?

Mr. GROOM (for Sir JOSEPH COOK).—A Public Service Superannuation Bill has been prepared and has yet to be considered by a sub-committee of Cabinet, but whether it will be introduced this session depends on circumstances.

FEDERAL CAPITAL.

ROAD AND STREET CONSTRUCTION—PLANS OF HOSTEL AND HALLS.

Mr. BURCHELL (for Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN) asked the Minister for Works and Railways, *upon notice*—

1. In view of the fact that a large number of men are reported to be wanting work at present, and in view of the fact that a large sum of money was voted last year by both Houses by substantial majorities, is it true that hardly any employment is being given on the roads and streets at Canberra; and, if so, what is the reason?

2. Is it a fact that owing to delay in carrying out these Canberra works a large proportion of the money voted will not be expended during this financial year?

Mr. GROOM.—The replies are:—

1. A sum of £6,000 has already been expended this financial year upon roads, and a further report by the Advisory Committee upon this subject has just come to hand. The usual expenditure on maintenance of the roads is still taking place, twenty-one men being employed on the work.

2. The expenditure authorized to date amounts to £111,779, including £32,500 in payment of the buildings and equipment taken over from the trustees of the Molonglo Internment Camp, and the works covered by such authorization are well advanced. Reports upon other important works have just been received, and will be submitted forthwith to Cabinet.

Mr. BOWDEN (for Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN) asked the Minister for Works and Railways, *upon notice*—

When will he submit the plans for hostel and halls and other large works at Canberra to the Public Works Committee for inquiry and report?

Mr. GROOM.—The reports upon these subjects have been received from the Advisory Committee, and will be submitted forthwith to Cabinet.

CASE OF MRS. FARR.

Mr. RILEY asked the Minister for Home and Territories, *upon notice*—

1. Whether a certificate of exemption has been granted to permit of the admission to and domicile in the Commonwealth of Mrs. Farr, who, it is alleged, is insane, and who is at present an inmate of St. Margaret's Hospital, Ryde, Sydney?

2. If a certificate of exemption has been granted, what are the terms and conditions of same, and what reasons were advanced for the granting of such exemption?

3. If an exemption has not been granted, will the Minister take the necessary steps to deal with the person or persons responsible for Mrs. Farr's entry into the Commonwealth in contravention of section 13 of the Immigration Restriction Act?

4. In the event of no exemption having been granted, and viewing the allegations as to Mrs. Farr's insanity prior to her coming to the Commonwealth—she thus apparently being a prohibited immigrant—will the Minister refrain from making any order affecting Mrs. Farr's personal freedom in or removal from the Commonwealth until a full inquiry has been instituted as to her sanity or otherwise?

Mr. GROOM (for Mr. POYNTON).—The replies are—

1. and 2. No certificate of exemption was issued in favour of Mrs. Farr.

3. and 4. Inquiries are being made on certain points relating to Mrs. Farr's entrance into the

Commonwealth and the arrangements made for her maintenance and hospital treatment while in Australia. A further statement will be made next week.

POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

CLERICAL DIVISION.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY asked the Postmaster-General, *upon notice*—

1. Whether 23 out of a total of 35 officers of the Clerical Division, 5th Class, Engineer's Branch, Postmaster-General's Department, Victoria, are at present receiving the maximum salary of £210 per annum?

2. Will practically the whole of these officers, with the exception of about half-a-dozen, be in receipt of the maximum salary by 1st March, 1922?

3. How many promotions from Class 5 to Class 4 have there been within this branch during the past ten years?

4. If there are an extraordinary number of these 5th Class officers who are in receipt of the maximum salary, and whose chance of promotion within the Postmaster-General's Department is consequently remote, has any proposal been considered in the direction of providing them with an opportunity of transfer to other Departments where the chances of promotions are more favorable?

5. If not, will the Minister take steps to have full consideration given to such a proposal, so that justice may be done to these officers?

Mr. GROOM (for Mr. WISE)—Inquiries are being made, and replies will be furnished as soon as possible.

KOORMAN TOMYAIFF.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (for Mr. CONSIDINE) asked the Minister for Home and Territories, *upon notice*—

1. Whether or not the man charged with the murder of the late Percy Brookfield, M.L.A. (Sturt, New South Wales), Koorman Tomyaiff by name, is, under the laws of the Commonwealth, an alien?

2. If so, in view of the conflicting statements that have been made as to the actual happenings at Riverton (South Australia) on the morning of the shooting, and the alleged failure of the South Australian authorities to hold a thorough and exhaustive inquiry into the whole of the circumstances surrounding the death of Mr. Brookfield, together with the sworn statement of the local policeman at Riverton that Tomyaiff informed him that he had received the sum of £100 (one hundred pounds) for the assassination of Mr. Brookfield, will the Minister order an immediate and thorough investigation to be made into this matter?

3. Pending some such searching inquiry, will the Minister see that Tomyaiff is not deported from the Commonwealth?

Mr. GROOM (for Mr. POYNTON).—The replies are—

1. So far as the Government is aware, Tomyaiff is an alien.

2. The institution of an inquiry along the lines suggested is not considered to be a matter for action by the Commonwealth Government.

3. As Tomyaiff has been declared to be insane, and there is no early likelihood of his being set at liberty, no action has yet been taken in regard to his deportation from the Commonwealth; but arrangements have been made whereby the Home and Territories Department will be notified beforehand if his release is contemplated at any time, in order that the question of deportation may receive due consideration.

CHILD ENDOWMENT.

Mr. BLUNDELL asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Whether widows (other than cleaners) employed in the Commonwealth Service are entitled to the allowance for children paid to married men and widowers?

Mr. GROOM (for Sir JOSEPH COOK).—Not under the existing regulations governing the payment of child endowment. The question of an extension of the provisions of the regulations in re-

spect of this matter has, however, been under consideration, but a decision will not be given pending settlement of the plaint now before the Public Service Arbitrator in regard to the fixing of a basic wage for the Public Service.

WAR PENSIONS.

Mr. RODGERS.—Yesterday the honorable member for Brisbane (Mr. Cameron) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation the following question:—

Will he furnish a statement for the purpose of comparison showing the maximum scales of war pensions payable by Australia, Great Britain, and other parts of the Empire, as well as by our Allies in the late European war in respect of—

- (a) disabled soldier;
- (b) widow of soldier;
- (c) widowed mother of deceased soldier;
- (d) disabled soldier, his wife, and three children.

I am now in a position to say that the information asked for has been obtained, and is set out in the following statement:—

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT SHOWING THE MAXIMUM WEEKLY RATE OF WAR PENSIONS PAYABLE BY AUSTRALIA, GREAT BRITAIN, AND OTHER PARTS OF THE EMPIRE, AS WELL AS BY OUR ALLIES, IN THE LATE EUROPEAN WAR, IN RESPECT OF (a) DISABLED SOLDIER; (b) WIDOW OF SOLDIER; (c) WIDOWED MOTHER OF DECEASED SOLDIER; (d) DISABLED SOLDIER, HIS WIFE AND THREE CHILDREN.

(Compiled from latest available information).

—	Australia.	United Kingdom.	Canada.	New Zealand.	South Africa.	France.	Italy.	United States.
Blinded or permanently and absolutely incapacitated man	80/- (Special rate)							
Totally disabled man	42/-	40/-	47/11	40/-	40/- (If a man is permanently bedridden or incapable of earning, an additional sum up to 20/- may be granted)	37/- (In case of several injuries this may be increased)	19/4	23/10
Widow of soldier (Additional pensions are granted to children)	23/6 (With dependent children or in necessitous circumstances, up to 42/-)	20/- (26/8 on attaining age of 40)	46/-	30/-	25/-	11/3½	9/7	24/-
Widowed mother	20/- (May be augmented by 15/- per week living allowance if in necessitous circumstances)	Dependency pensions, up to 18/-	23/-	15/- to 30/- (According to dependence)	19/-	12/3	9/7	19/2
Disabled soldier wife, and three children	82/6	69/6	91/-	90/-	75/10	50/9	33/11	72/-

TARIFF.

*In Committee of Ways and Means:*Consideration resumed from 25th May (*vide* page 8654).

DIVISION V.—TEXTILES, FELTS, AND FURS, AND MANUFACTURES THEREOF, AND ATTIRE.

Item 106—

	British Preferential Tariff.	Intermediate Tariff.	General Tariff.
(A) Buttons n.e.i., for Bonnets, Hats, Shoes, and other attire, not being partly or wholly of gold or silver; Cotton Featherstitch Braids; Piping; Tinsel Cloth; Tinsel Belting, having warp or weft composed wholly of tinsel or of continuous threads of tinsel and an alternate thread of textile; Tinsel Thread ad val.	Free	5 per cent.	15 per cent.
(B) Trimmings and Ornaments n.e.i (except Buckles, Clasps, and Slides, of metal) for Bonnets, Hats, Shoes, and other attire, not being partly or wholly of gold or silver; Badges n.e.i.; Braids n.e.i.; Fringes n.e.i.; Frillings; Ruffings; Pleatings; Ruchings; Galoons n.e.i.; Ribbons n.e.i.; Tinselled Belting n.e.i.; Webbing n.e.i.; Belting for apparel not elsewhere specified and not being cut to length for belts ad val.	15 per cent.	20 per cent.	30 per cent.

Mr. CORSER (Wide Bay) [5.21].—I desire to draw the attention of the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) to the fact that buttons from Great Britain are admitted free, although they are being manufactured in the Commonwealth. I do not intend to move an amendment, but I would suggest that buttons, wholly of metal, other than trouser buttons, should be taxed at 30 per cent., 35 per cent., and 40 per cent. I feel sure that this matter has been considered by the Minister, and I trust that he will be agreeable to adopt my suggestion.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [5.22].—I desire to move two amendments to this item, one of which deals with the question raised by the honorable member for Wide Bay (Mr. Corser). The first amendment relates to braids, straw, or grass for hat-making. I move—

That the item be amended by adding the following sub-item:—

“(C) Braids, straw or grass, for hat-making—

1. Not bleached or dyed, on and after 27th May, 1921, free.

2. Bleached or dyed, on and after 27th May, 1921, ad. val., British and intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.

If this amendment is agreed to, it will make braids, straw, or grass for hat-making entirely free, provided that when

it is imported it is neither bleached nor dyed. We are not giving any British preference, because this class of work is not conducted in Great Britain, and, consequently, there would be no object in making any distinction.

Mr. CHARLTON.—What is meant by bleached or dyed?

Mr. GREENE.—It is a process of manufacture. If the braid is plaited, one of two things has to be done before it is made up into hat-shapes. Material has either to be bleached white, or dyed if it is to be used for coloured hats. If it is brought in in its original state, no duty will be charged, because the work of bleaching and dyeing will be done here.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [5.25].—If the Committee agrees to the amendment which the Minister has moved, can we then go back to consider sub-items A and B?

Mr. GREENE.—No; but I am prepared to withdraw my amendment temporarily if the honorable member has a previous amendment to move. I am not cutting out sub-item A.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—That is so, but the Minister has left out of that sub-item some things which were included in it previously, and I want to know why those things have been taken out. I have no objection to the amendment which the Minister has now moved, but I think it should be withdrawn until we hear his

reasons for taking articles out of sub-item A which were previously included in it.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [5.26].—The items omitted from sub-item A, as appearing in the old Tariff, are buckles, clasps, and slides. They are now classified under item 208.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—What for?

Mr. GREENE.—The reason is that the manufacture of these articles as well as the class of articles spoken of by the honorable member for Wide Bay (Mr. Corser), was undertaken on a large scale in this country during the war. These articles are now manufactured here in very large numbers, and they have, therefore, been taken out of sub-item A, and have been put in an item under which they will be dutiable.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I am satisfied so long as I know the reason for what has been done.

Mr. GREENE.—I ask leave to withdraw my amendment temporarily.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [5.27].—I cannot profess to have a knowledge of the importation of goods, and I wish that some members of the Committee who possess that knowledge would look into these proposals to know how they affect the trading of the country. From information placed at my disposal, and from the attitude of the Minister, I am led to the conclusion that there is almost an absolute disregard of how the Tariff proposals affect the importation of various articles by the public. They are so mixed up in different items as to make the administration of the Tariff very difficult for the Customs Department and for the public, and necessarily, on that account, more expensive for the people generally. It seems to me that throughout this Tariff the Minister has accentuated this difficulty. I know that his desire is to make the Tariff more complete, but it is possible to go too much into detail, and I must say that all the other Tariffs I have read appear to me to have been framed with far greater simplicity than this. I point out, for instance, that if a person imported a knife, fork, and steel in a single case, it would be found that each of the articles is placed for duty under three different items. That is carrying detail to an absurdity. Most of the articles covered by

the items now under consideration are imported for purposes of manufacture, and the Minister desires that they shall be admitted free of duty, but he has transferred some of the items to other items in the Tariff under which they will be dutiable. In the case of small articles of this kind I think that is not justified. I move—

That sub-item A be amended by adding:—
“And on and after 27th May, 1921, buttons for attire not being partly or wholly of gold or silver; cotton featherstich braids; plain braids of one colour; piping; bindings; ferretings; filletings; statute galoon; edgings for attire; webbings, n.e.i.; tinsel thread; boned beltings; boot laces other than leather; stay laces.”

These articles are required for manufacturing purposes.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—And many of them are not made here.

Mr. GREGORY.—I am given to understand that none of them are made here.

Mr. GREENE.—The honorable member overlooks the fact that sub-item A is a free item.

Mr. GREGORY.—It is a free item under the British preferential column, but some of the articles included in my amendment are included in sub-item B and are dutiable at 15, 20, and 30 per cent. I do not intend to press my amendment, and I do not raise the question with a view to putting difficulties in the Minister's way.

Mr. RYAN.—What is the use of moving the amendment if the honorable member does not press it?

Mr. GREGORY.—If the honorable member had been much in the chamber recently, he would have seen a hundred reasons for it.

Mr. RYAN.—I do not see the object of moving an amendment unless the honorable member means business.

Mr. GREGORY.—I do not intend to press my amendment, because the information given to me may not fit in with the departmental ideas. I am sure that the Minister realizes that I am not trying to embarrass him, or, in this case, to increase or reduce duties. What I am fighting for is the simplification of the Tariff, and that, I believe, will do a great deal of good. It would assist importers in passing their goods through the Customs. There are grave difficulties to-day, and they are increased by the form in which this Tariff is presented. I should like

to have my amendment on record, though, if the Minister explains that it cannot be accepted, I shall be prepared later to withdraw it.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [5.34].—We have made a number of alterations in classification that have been due to one of two causes. Either we were taking out of the free list certain articles which we considered should be dutiable owing to the fact that their manufacture had been established in this country, such as clasps, slides, buckles, and certain buttons, or they were considered necessary as the result of the experience of the Department in handling certain goods. Necessarily the Department gathers experience in the working of the Tariff.

Mr. BOWDEN.—Do the alterations tend to simplification, so far as the public are concerned?

Mr. GREENE.—Certainly; they are all made to simplify the working of the Tariff.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—There is a difference between simplification of methods of administration and simplification of the duties cast upon the public by the Tariff.

Mr. GREENE.—I think that every simplification of administration tends to simplify the work required of the public. The two things are correlated. I am quite sure, from the many talks I have had with my officers over a number of these things, that when we come down to actual details, it will be found that there is a good and sufficient reason for every alteration made. I do not mean to say that the Department is infallible. We may have made mistakes in some instances.

Mr. GREGORY.—I am asking for the inclusion of bootlaces and staylaces, which already, under regulations, the Minister has admitted free under item 404. In one part of the Tariff they are liable to duty, while departmentally the Minister admits them free.

Mr. GREENE.—Bootlaces and staylaces are free under the Tariff now.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Minister has put them under item 404.

Mr. GREENE.—There may be a good departmental reason for doing that, but the public know where they are in regard to these matters.

Mr. GREGORY.—What I object to is that, after Parliament imposes a duty on an

article, the Minister admits it free later by departmental regulation.

Mr. GREENE.—I have already explained that matter over and over again. That principle has run through all our Tariffs. It would be utterly impossible to lay down in the Tariff a duty for everything we import in one form or another.

Mr. BOWDEN.—Bootlaces and staylaces are very simple things to include in this item.

Mr. GREENE.—They could be included in the item, but there are one hundred and one other things that might also be included. Instead of making the Tariff simpler by adopting the course suggested, we should make it infinitely more difficult. I feel satisfied that in regard to classifications the Committee will be well advised to leave the items as they stand.

Mr. BOWDEN.—Where anything is left to departmental regulations, as bootlaces and staylaces are now, there is always trouble given to the public.

Mr. GREENE.—I cannot agree with the honorable member, in view of the fact that hundreds of things are dealt with in that way. The trading public understand these matters, and know exactly where they stand.

Mr. GREGORY.—The difficulty is that they can be altered from day to day.

Mr. GREENE.—Every alteration is published. If we were to attempt to alter the classifications, as proposed, we should merely create for the public, as well as for the Department, ten times more difficulties than we would remedy.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER (Wakefield) [5.38].—Many of the articles in the item under review are required for what has become a very important business in Australia, namely, the manufacture and trimming of ladies' hats. The Minister has put these goods under an item where they will be dutiable at 15, 20, and 30 per cent., because the manufacture of two or three of them has been started in Australia. I remind him that two or three of these articles are no earthly good for the millinery business.

Mr. GREENE.—The honorable member is entirely wrong.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Will the Minister tell me where I am wrong?

Mr. GREENE.—There is nothing in the item on which we are collecting duty for

protectionist purposes. There is no protection to any industry involved in this item at all.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Then why did the Minister tell the Committee just now that the manufacture of three or four of these articles has been established in the Commonwealth?

Mr. BOWDEN.—Those were buckles, clasps, and slides.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I am talking about articles required for millinery.

Mr. GREENE.—Clasps and slides are not in the item.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER. — But trimmings and ornaments are. It is not sufficient to have three or four people who have begun to make these fancy lines in Australia, because for this particular class of business infinite variety is necessary. If the Minister says that this duty is imposed for purely revenue purposes, that is quite another matter.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [5.41].—I desire to press this matter a little further. Under the departmental by-laws the Minister has taken the power to deal with dutiable goods under item 404, under which "Materials and minor articles as prescribed by departmental by-laws for use in the manufacture of goods within the Commonwealth" are free if imported from Great Britain. Nearly all the articles included in my amendment have been so dealt with. Although this Parliament may place a duty on certain goods, the Minister, by notice in his weekly Tariff circular, can transfer them to the free list. Later on he can, if he thinks fit, transpose them once more to the dutiable list. The question of whether or not an article should come in free should rest, not with the Minister, but with the Parliament itself. The alteration of the wording of the item in connexion with buttons, I am advised, is merely a simplification. I am told that, at the request of the Chamber of Manufactures and the metal interests, we are to have a proposal for a duty on buttons. I shall deal with that proposal when it comes before us. As to my amendment, I am advised that—

Plain braids of one colour should be free, irrespective of width. Webbing is only used for manufacturing purposes, and are not used for external wear. At present they are included under item 106B, but are delivered free by the Minister as "minor articles."

If the Committee decides to put a duty upon them, that duty should remain until the Parliament otherwise determines. If we say they are to be free, they should remain free. It is not for the Minister but for the Parliament to say what shall or shall not be free and what shall or shall not be dutiable.

Mr. CORSER.—If there is a large factory using these "minor articles"—

Mr. GREGORY.—If we start a new industry in the bush, will the Minister take the duty off the raw material that it requires? Any man who ventures to set up a factory in one of our cities, it seems to me, may get his raw material free of duty, whereas the man in the bush has to pay duty on all that he requires. Is that to be the policy of the Government? I fail to see why it should be possible for a man who can bring pressure to bear on the Department or the Minister to get his goods in for manufacturing purposes duty free, while the man who is not prepared to stoop to that sort of thing has to pay duty on all that he requires.

Mr. CHARLTON.—On a point of order, I submit that the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) is not entitled on this item to deal with the general question of departmental by-laws and the powers of the Minister. For nearly ten minutes he has been repeating statements that have already been made by him from time to time in regard to departmental by-laws and the power of the Minister to do certain things. There is no reference in the item to departmental by-laws.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—On the point of order, I submit that the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) is entitled to refer to the departmental by-laws, since the Minister claims power under them to transfer items from the dutiable list to item 404 under which materials and minor articles "as prescribed by departmental by-laws" are free so far as the British preferential Tariff is concerned.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Watkins).—The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) was quite in order in referring to certain articles having been taken out of this item and placed under another item by virtue of the power conferred on the Minister by certain departmental by-laws.

Mr. GREGORY.—Had I been complaining about the action of the Minister in allowing coal cutting machinery to come in free under item 174, I could have understood the objection raised by the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton). Coal-cutting machinery was probably dealt with in that way as the result of some of the influences to which I have been taking exception.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I know nothing about any influence having been brought to bear upon the Minister. The honorable member spoke just now of certain advice he had received. May I ask who is advising him?

Mr. GREGORY.—What has that to do with the honorable member?

Mr. CHARLTON.—The honorable member inferred just now that I had been using certain influence, and I think I am entitled to ask him who are his advisers.

Mr. GREGORY.—Not at all. I want it to be understood that I am not asking for lower duties. I am seeking merely for a simplification of the Tariff. If the information I have received is correct—

Mr. GREENE.—It is a pity the honorable member's informant did not come to us in the first instance and tell us what his trouble was.

Mr. GREGORY.—No doubt the matter has been placed before the Department. The Minister cannot be familiar with all the requests which are made to his Department. Tariff alterations are of weekly occurrence. Every week the Tariff circular, giving particulars of alterations, is issued.

Mr. GREENE.—And it has been issued ever since there was a Customs Department.

Mr. GREGORY.—When representations are made to the Minister that certain dutiable goods not-manufactured in Australia are required for manufacturing purposes he transposes them either to item 174 or item 404, under which they can come in free.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Do these weekly circulars deal only with such alterations?

Mr. GREGORY.—Almost wholly. The Minister has made many alterations, acting sometimes, no doubt, on departmental recommendations. It is natural that many alterations should be required, but my contention is that a decision of the Parliament placing any item on the free list or making it dutiable should

be varied only by the Parliament. Seeing that nearly every item I have included in my amendment has already been dealt with by the Minister under item 404, I shall certainly press it.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [5.52].

—It seems to me that we have reached a stage in our history when it is considered reprehensible for an honorable member to advocate any cause but that of the manufacturers. There is something radically wrong with the present situation, seeing that we are expected to give every attention to the claims of the manufacturer, and to pay no regard to the protection of the consumer. The man who has to carry the burden is not to be considered. I am in agreement with the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) in regard to the framing of this Tariff. In nearly every item we see a reference to departmental by-laws. It seems to me that in the circumstances it is unnecessary for us to discuss the Tariff. Why not hand over the whole schedule to the Minister and his officials, and let them deal with it as they please? The honorable member for Dampier is also right in his statement that the Tariff is altered from week to week without the knowledge of the Parliament. The Minister has power to make alterations. He can put dutiable articles on the free list and *vice versa*.

Mr. GREGORY.—I do not think he has the power to do that.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—He has been doing it.

Mr. GREENE.—And every Minister for Trade and Customs has done exactly the same thing.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I am finding fault not with the Minister, but with the Parliament for giving the Minister power to make such alterations. What is the use of our passing a Tariff if the Minister or one of his officials may alter it at his own sweet will? As the honorable member for Dampier has said, the man who can bring pressure to bear on the Minister may have articles required by him for manufacturing purposes placed on the free list, while the poor, struggling man in the country who has no influence has to pay a duty on everything. Why were the small lines to which the honorable member has referred

taken out of the item under which they fell in the old Tariff? If the Parliament imposes a duty on any article I am convinced that it will be prepared to remit that duty where satisfactory reasons can be shown for doing so. I do not believe in a "one-man show," but that is what we are getting under the departmental by-law in regard to this particular item.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [5.55].—I have tried to follow both honorable members who have spoken, but—I do not know why it is—I cannot get their point. The honorable member for Maranoa (Mr. James Page) has just said that we have no consideration for the consumer.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Nor have you!

Mr. GREENE.—Every action that we take under item 404 is in the consumer's interest, and I do not know why the honorable member cannot see it. It is easy for me, after my long experience in dealing with the Tariff, to appreciate how that item works out, but I can quite understand that it is difficult for any one without that experience to grip it in the same way. There are a vast number of articles which come under various classifications, and are dutiable under the Tariff. Item 404 confers a special power which Parliament deliberately placed in the hands of the Minister, and it reads as follows:—

Materials and minor articles, as prescribed by departmental by-laws for use in the manufacture of goods within the Commonwealth.

are free under the British and intermediate Tariffs, and dutiable at 10 per cent. under the general Tariff.

Mr. GREGORY.—Take the case of coal-cutting machines, for example.

Mr. GREENE.—We shall deal with coal-cutting machines when we come to them; they fall under a different item altogether. Inasmuch as Parliament deliberately gave this power to the Minister with the intention that it should be used, surely we are not to go on collecting the duties when the intention of Parliament was that these articles should be free? It would be utterly impossible to enumerate and set these out in detail—as no one can tell what minor articles would be covered; the matter has to be determined when a case arises. That is done under item 404, and it is done in the consumers' interest. If we collected the duty on a variety of goods, none of which can be

made in Australia, the manufacturer would naturally have to pass it on, and, as I say, the action, when taken, is deliberately in the interests of the consuming public. I cannot see to what the honorable member is objecting.

Mr. GREGORY.—But if you put on a heavy duty, I cannot see where the consumer gets an advantage. You are talking of articles required in manufacture, but the duty remains on the articles that are manufactured.

Mr. GREENE.—That is perfectly true.

Mr. WIENHOLT.—The manufacturer ought to have a "taste of his own medicine."

Mr. GREENE.—If we wish to give some measure of protection to the manufacturer, all we have to do is to increase the protection so that he may pay the duty on the various articles he has to import.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Does item 404 mean that the Department may take a duty off one week and restore it the next?

Mr. GREENE.—The position is that Parliament has included hundreds and hundreds of articles in some of the group items of the Tariff. It would be impossible to enumerate them, and so we have a large group of lines under n.e.i., which very often covers goodness knows what. The object of item 404 is that where articles are dutiable under the Tariff, and the articles are not made in Australia, the duty may be taken off; and if the manufacture of the articles is established, the duty is automatically imposed. There has always been such a provision in our Tariff.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Shall we get the clauses to that effect in the Bill?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes; and it would be practically impossible to administer the Tariff without some such power, as the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best), who has been Minister for Customs, knows. We are only doing what other people do; there is nothing new or fresh in the proposal, and, so far as I know, no one has ever raised complaint except the honorable member for Dampier.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [6.1].—In the case of tubes for bicycles, side-cars, and so forth, the Minister says they can come in free under item 404. I point out, however, that Parliament has said there shall be a duty on such tubes. Where articles have been classified, they should

be dutiable in the category in which they are placed in the Tariff—all should be free, or subject to a duty as prescribed by the Tariff.

Amendment negatived.

Amendment (by Mr. GREENE) agreed to—

That the following words be added:—

“(c) Braids, straw, or grass, for hat-making:—(1) Not bleached or dyed—On and after 27th May, 1921, free. (2) Bleached or dyed—On and after 27th May, 1921, ad val., British, and intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.”

Amendment (by Mr. GREENE) proposed—

That the following words be added:—

“(d) Buttons, wholly of metal other than gold or silver, of the class used externally on uniforms and liveries—On and after 27th May, 1921, ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.”

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [6.6].—I am wondering whether the Committee think it necessary to have the slightest information when new proposals are put before us. The Minister has introduced an amendment to impose a duty on certain buttons, but has not given us the slightest information regarding it. Under the circumstances it would be as well for honorable members to know that the Associated Chamber of Manufactures met last week and came to the conclusion that this is a good time to ask for more duties. That chamber has sent out circulars, of which I have been able to obtain copies, suggesting that nearly everything that can be made in Australia ought to be made dutiable in the future. It has sent out word suggesting, in this case, duties of 30 per cent., 35 per cent., and 40 per cent., drawing attention to the fact that the great bulk of buttons used for the uniforms in the various public Departments are imported free of duty, whereas they could all be produced in Australia.

Mr. CORSER.—The sheet metal of which they are made carries a duty.

Mr. GREGORY.—What is the metal that we need to import into this country, seeing that we have all metals here? Can the honorable member say what metal is imported for this purpose?

Mr. CORSER.—Yes, there is a duty, British 35 per cent.—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Watkins).—Order!

Mr. GREGORY.—What I object to is the Chamber of Manufactures being able to “run” this Parliament. We have heard nothing from the Minister by way of justification for this proposed duty. It would appear that whatever suggestion is made for high duties is accepted.

Mr. BOWDEN (Nepean) [6.9].—Surely we ought to have some explanation of an item of this sort. I suppose that the largest users of uniform buttons are the State Governments, in connexion with their railways, tramways, police, and other services. Even according to the statement laid before us by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), these articles can be made in Australia, if the duty is imposed.

Mr. GREENE.—They are being made here.

Mr. BOWDEN.—The statement is not that of the honorable member for Dampier, but is made by the Chamber of Manufactures. It is not a statement by the Chamber of Commerce, or by importers. We should know why these new items are to be put in. The Committee is entitled to the information which we are now getting by way of interjection from honorable members opposite. The explanation should come from the Minister.

Mr. GREENE.—When I first spoke on this item I gave the whole of the reasons. If honorable members in the Committee were not listening, that is not my fault. I gave the reasons very distinctly. I object to the honorable member saying that I have given the Committee no information.

Question.—That the proposed new sub-item D be added (Mr. GREENE's amendment)—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	..	..	28
Noes	..	..	10
Majority	..	..	18

AYES.

Bell, G. J.	Lister, J. H.
Best, Sir Robert	Mackay, G. H.
Blakeley, A.	Makin, N. J. O.
Blundell, R. P.	Mathews, J.
Cameron, D. C.	McGrath, D. C.
Charlton, M.	Moloney, Parker
Cook, Sir Joseph	Riley, E.
Corser, E. B. C.	Rodgers, A. S.
Cunningham, L. L.	Ryan, T. J.
Foley, G.	Smith, Laird
Greene, W. M.	Wise, G. H.
Groom, L. E.	
Hay, A.	
Higgs, W. G.	
Lamond, Hector	

Tellers:

Burchell, R. J.
Story, W. H.

NOES.

Bowden, E. K.
Brennan, F.
Gabb, J. M.
Gibson, W. G.
Gregory, H.
Hill, W. C.

Prowse, J. H.
Wienholt, A.

Tellers:

Foster, Richard
Page, James.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 107—

Woven materials in the piece or otherwise:— Ribbons and galoons having not more than 48 ribs to the lineal inch, ad. val., British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 50 per cent.

MR. GREGORY (Dampier) [6.17].—I should like the Minister to agree to a small amendment in this item, by striking out the words “ribbons and galoons having not more than forty-eight ribs to the lineal inch.” I understand that, as it stands, the item means a lot of trouble in the Customs Department, because, when these ribbons are imported, they have to be specially picked out and counted, and if they have not more than forty-eight ribs to the lineal inch, they are dutiable.

MR. MATHEWS.—That is the only way in which evasion of duty can be prevented.

MR. GREGORY.—I really do not care what the duty is. I merely want to have this objection removed if possible. I am advised that the Inter-State Commission (*vide* appendix to report No. 193) received a request from the Australian Weaving Company for increased duties on galoons only up to 32 ribs to the inch. This was afterwards withdrawn and an amended proposition substituted asking for this increase on certain fancy galoons only. The present proposal set out in this item covers infinitely more ground and is a vexatious interference with the local manufacture of apparel, besides imposing a higher rate of duty on ribbons, otherwise identical with those in item 106B and increasing the difficulties of classification. If the Minister says the amendment will render the item unworkable, I shall not press my request.

MR. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [6.18].—I understand the item has been so worded because that class of galoons is made here, and the object is to protect our own manufacturers. Therefore, the ribbons and galoons mentioned by the honorable member are placed in a class by themselves.

Item agreed to.

Item 108—

(A) Feathers, undressed, and down, ad val., 15 per cent.

(B) Feathers, dressed, including feathers made up into trimmings; also natural birds and wings, ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

MR. CHARLTON (Hunter) [6.20].—The Inter-State Commission recommended that feathers, undressed, should be admitted free, and that a substantial duty should be imposed upon the finished article, in order to encourage the local treatment of feathers. Would it not be an advantage to carry out their recommendation with a view to fostering Australian industry?

MR. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [6.21].—There are several persons in Australia who dress locally-produced poultry feathers and down. Then there are also local ostrich feathers which are prepared for use. For this reason we have retained the duty, which is not very high, on undressed feathers, and have considerably increased the duty on dressed feathers. The former will protect our own growers of feathers, and the latter will protect the person who imports undressed feathers and dresses them locally. The duty on dressed feathers has been increased by 5 per cent. British and 10 per cent. general.

Item agreed to.

Item 109—

(A) Artificial flowers *n.e.i.*, artificial plants, fruits, leaves, and grain, of all kinds and materials, ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

(B) Artificial flowers in sprays and trails, per dozen sprays or trails, British, 3s.; intermediate, 3s. 3d.; general, 3s. 6d.; or ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent., whichever rate returns the higher duty.

MR. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [6.25].—At the earnest request of the Inter-State Commission I altered the wording of this item as it appeared in the old Tariff.

MR. GREGORY.—It has proved unworkable?

MR. GREENE.—We were inclined to think it would, but were willing to give it a trial. However, it has proved quite unworkable, and, therefore, I propose to ask the Committee to revert to the original wording. I move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—“and on and after 27th May,

1921, artificial plants, flowers, fruits, leaves, and grains of all kinds and materials, *ad val.*, British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [6.26].—Many might be inclined to think that the artificial flowers industry is not worth encouraging, but it is an important source of employment to many persons in Australia. The local makers have great difficulty in getting a footing. They cannot expect the importing houses to help them, and unless they can deal directly with the retailers they are in a very peculiar position. Unfortunately they do not get that assistance which they need from the retail houses. At present large quantities of Swiss artificial flowers are imported, but as Switzerland has never been noted as a country which manufactures these articles, we are of the opinion that they are German flowers. I hope the Minister will consent to increase the general Tariff by another 5 per cent. I have seen women's hats in milliners' windows for sale at about £1 10s. each. The straw in one of these hats would be worth about 6s. wholesale, and the artificial flowers on it about 4s. 6d. wholesale, but the price of the article is increased considerably because of the number of hands it has passed through. The wholesale people may possibly pay 1s. per dozen for sprays, but by the time they are fixed in a lady's hat the price is possibly increased by 300 per cent. The importance of this trade is not generally understood. There is an establishment in my electorate making artificial flowers, and employing about sixty hands; but in New South Wales the business is on a much larger scale. I have with me some samples of the flowers produced by local makers. I have brought these samples to show what can be done in Australia.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 8 p.m.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I ask the Minister if he will favorably consider a proposal to increase the general Tariff on artificial flowers by 5 per cent.?

Mr. GREENE.—I have already increased the duty by 10 per cent.

Mr. GREGORY.—The duties have been raised to 30 per cent. and 40 per cent. from 25 per cent. and 30 per cent.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Why not make the rates 60 per cent., 70 per cent., and 80 per cent.?

Mr. MATHEWS.—We should be doing something civilized if we did that. But as I know that if the Minister will not accept a proposal it is useless to press it, I shall not move an amendment.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [8.4].—The Minister has not told us why he has increased these rates from 25 per cent. and 30 per cent. Has he done it by way of acknowledging Australia's obligations to the Mother Country, or does he wish to prohibit the importation of the finery and flimsies that the working girls and women of this country like to buy? I am surprised that the honorable member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews) should wish for a still higher rate. Of course, if the Minister says that he needs the revenue, that is another matter.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 110—

Apparel, articles of, viz.:—

(b) Apparel, *n.e.i.*, for the human body, partly or wholly made up, including materials cut into shape therefor; also material defined by pattern or design for manufacture into apparel; second-hand apparel not imported for sale or trade and not exceeding a total value of £5, *ad val.*, British, 40 per cent.; intermediate, 50 per cent.; general, 55 per cent.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [8.7].—The duties set out in sub-item A of item 110 are practically the same as those in the last Tariff. I notice that in one line the words "Coats, girls," are substituted for the words, "Coats, children's." I do not know how a distinction can be drawn between a child's, a girl's, and a woman's coat. But I rose to ask the Minister why there should be a duty of so much per article and an *ad valorem* duty as well. Would it not be simpler to increase the *ad valorem* rates, and to get rid of the piece rates?

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.10].—The object of this arrangement, which has been in force for some considerable time, is to protect the local clothing industry from the competition of end-of-the-season goods sold at cut prices. It is a protection against dumping.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [8.12].—In the previous Tariff corsets were dutiable under item 110A at 10 per cent.

British and 15 per cent. general. Now they fall into item 110a, and are dutiable at 40 per cent., 50 per cent., and 55 per cent. To bring them back to the former rates I intend to move to make the duties 10 per cent. and 15 per cent. There has been sent to members a circular in which it is stated that hundreds of persons in Australia, but chiefly in New South Wales, are employed in the making of corsets, but I am credibly informed that practically no corsets are made in this country, nearly all being imported, mostly from Great Britain.

Mr. RILEY.—A great many are made in my electorate.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—These are what are known in the trade as “maids’ corsets.” Even for these all the material used is imported, and I am told that to make proper women’s corsets here it would be necessary to import skilled work-people as well. Therefore, I think that the rates of duty on corsets should not be increased. A duty on corsets is a class duty; it is a duty falling upon women as a class, because all women wear corsets. My lady buys a very expensive article, and other women buy according to their means, but all use imported corsets. If local manufacturers had made any considerable attempt to produce corsets, I would be prepared to give them all the protection possible, but at present they are not making any progress in this industry, although several attempts at establishing it have been made. The Minister (Mr. Greene), in proposing to give increased protection to the manufacturer, is placing an additional burden on every woman in the country.

Mr. LISTER (Corio) [8.16].—This discussion confirms me in the opinion that, in the interests of a great many people, there should be representatives of the opposite sex in this Parliament to assist us in the discussion of matters of this kind. I have been informed that, despite all that has been said as to the wonderful opening existing in this country for the establishment of the corset-making industry, there are at the present time only 175 people engaged in it, receiving a total wage of £507 per week. I have here a list of the constituents of corsets, and it proves that the whole of

the materials for the industry have to be imported. The people who style themselves corset manufacturers have in the past produced only about 5 per cent. of the corsets required to encircle the graceful forms of our ladies. The bulk of their output is brassieres, a form of bust bodice, and children’s corsets. There are also certain higher-class corsets, made from silk and satin, to which I cannot refer under this item, but I think careful inquiry would disclose that only a very small percentage of the corsets required by the ladies of Australia is manufactured locally. Can the Minister furnish the Committee with any information to justify the increase of the Tariff from 10 per cent. to 40 per cent. British, and 55 per cent. general?

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.22].—Under the old Tariff, the impost of 10 per cent. British and 15 per cent. general was nothing more than a revenue duty. There was no considerable manufacture of corsets in the Commonwealth. It is quite true that a certain number of expensive corsets were made locally, but the corset most generally worn by ladies was not made in Australia. The Inter-State Commission in its report on corsets said—

The Commission is of opinion that this industry presents greater claims for consideration than some of the industries already enjoying substantial Tariff assistance, and that it is anomalous that it should receive different treatment from that extended to ordinary apparel. Compared with many articles of apparel, it involves a greater amount of labour, and, further, it is of advantage in the boxing, labelling, and printing, which are necessary for marketing the article. There is no reason why the claims of the corset manufacturers should not have equal treatment to that already extended to other manufacturers of apparel.

The Commission therefore recommends that item 106 (B) in the 1908-1911 Tariff, namely, Corsets, ad. val., 15 per cent. general and 10 per cent. preferential, be omitted from the Tariff, and that corsets be included in item 106 (A), apparel and attire n.e.i., 40 per cent. general and 35 per cent. preferential.

That recommendation has been followed. Anticipating that this item would be subject to some criticism, I made it my business to acquaint myself with the facts concerning the present extent of manufacture in the Commonwealth, and the prospects for the future. During the last twelve months, over 18,000 dozens of

ordinary corsets have been manufactured in Australia. I have seen a large number of girls and women engaged in making corsets, and there is no question that the industry is being carried on on commercial lines.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—They are making brassieres as well.

Mr. GREENE.—It is true that one factory in which I saw the actual operation of corset manufacture is owned by a firm which makes brassieres as well, but there are two quite distinct factories. Corset manufacture is carried on very extensively. I know that one large factory is now being established in Sydney in a six-story building, which is to be devoted entirely to the manufacture of corsets, whilst another large firm is making preparations to start manufacture in the Commonwealth. It is indisputable that, although this duty has been in operation for only a short period, the industry is in a fair way to become well established. I have followed the recommendation of the Inter-State Commission, which cannot be accused of having suggested any duties that were not really warranted. I assure the Committee that the corset-making industry is being established on sound commercial lines, and that within a short space of time the local manufacturer will be able to cater for practically the whole of the Australian trade.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [8.28].—In order that the Committee may know exactly what it is voting on, I should like to move—

That all the words after "Apparel" in item 110 (B) be struck out, and the words "and Attire, corsets," be inserted in lieu thereof.

I desire to revert to the same arrangement of the item as in the 1914 Tariff. If that is agreed to, I shall then move to alter the duty to 10 per cent. British, 15 per cent. intermediate, and 25 per cent. general. I have taken this action because I wish to ascertain whether it is the desire of the Minister (Mr. Greene) to obtain revenue from this particular item, or whether the duty upon it is intended to be protective in its incidence. From what I have gathered, the honorable gentleman intends the duty to be protective, as he wishes to promote the manufacture of corsets in Australia.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Then the amendment of the honorable member for Maranoa (Mr. James Page) will suit the honorable member all right.

Mr. GREGORY.—Under the ruling which has been given, to the effect that the insertion of a new item cannot be moved by a private member, will the Minister inform me whether there will be any difficulty in securing the insertion of a new sub-item c?

Mr. GREENE.—Of course, I do not propose to agree to the amendment suggested, but, provided that the Chairman is willing to accept it, I am quite agreeable to that course being adopted. Sub-item B reads—"Apparel, n.e.i."

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—That is just the point. We wish corsets to be specified.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That is the honorable member's amendment.

Mr. GREENE.—If corsets are not specified in the Tariff, they will be classified as n.e.i.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—But we want them specifically mentioned.

Mr. GREENE.—They are already included in sub-item B. The honorable member, I understand, wishes them to be excluded. The only way in which they can be excluded is by specifically mentioning them in the Tariff. Then they will be elsewhere included, and consequently will not fall under sub-item B.

Mr. GREGORY.—I merely desire the assurance of the Minister that no objection will be raised to the insertion of the amendment which has been outlined by the honorable member for Maranoa.

Mr. GREENE.—That is a matter for the Chairman to decide.

Amendment (by Mr. JAMES PAGE) proposed—

That the following new sub-item be inserted:—

"c. Corsets. On and after 27th May, 1921, ad val., British 10 per cent., intermediate 15 per cent., and general 20 per cent."

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [8.34].—The honorable member for Maranoa (Mr. James Page) has stated that corsets are not manufactured in Australia. I do not know why he made that misstatement.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I did not make any misstatement. They are not locally manufactured.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The Minister (Mr. Greene) has already informed us that

he has visited an establishment in which they are being manufactured upon a large scale. I, too, have seen it. The company engaged in this industry are erecting a large building, which they intend to extend as opportunity offers. The Minister has also stated that other large corset manufacturers propose commencing operations in Australia. They intend to follow the example of the manufacturers of other commodities overseas, who have intimated their intention to establish businesses within the Commonwealth. I was one of those who thought that this could not be done. I am glad to know that my opinion was not well founded. We have been told that the proposed duty will be a sex tax. But the duty under the old Tariff was merely a revenue duty, whereas this is a protective duty, which will encourage the manufacture of corsets in our midst. I do not pretend to be a better judge of a corset than is any other honorable member, but I claim to be quite as good a judge. The article which is being locally manufactured is an extraordinarily good one, as anybody conversant with the drapery trade will admit. As a matter of fact, the more expensive style of corsets has been manufactured in Australia for many years. Ladies who could afford to pay £3 3s., £4 4s., or £5 5s. for a superior article have always been able to obtain it. But the present is the first attempt which has been made to manufacture corsets for general female use. The question which we have to determine is whether we desire that Australia shall become a manufacturing country. I am a Protectionist, and I want to see these goods manufactured here upon an increasingly large scale.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [8.41].—I think we are now quite satisfied that the object of the Minister (Mr. Greene) in proposing a high duty upon corsets is for protective and not for revenue purposes. But, in my judgment, the duty will merely be a revenue-producing one for many years. It will be a very long time indeed before corsets will be manufactured in Australia to the extent that is necessary to supply local requirements.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The manufacture of corsets does not involve the use of expensive machinery.

Mr. GREGORY.—But I would point out that everything required in connexion with their manufacture must be imported.

Mr. WATKINS.—In my own electorate, within a short time, certain persons will be making wires for use in corsets.

Mr. GREGORY.—That is a very small matter. My point is that most of the materials required in the manufacture of corsets will have to be imported, and imported free of duty. I wish, also, to stress the fact that the women of Australia will be obliged to pay in the future considerably more for their corsets than they have done hitherto, on account of the duty which it is now proposed to levy upon them. The estimated value of the corsets imported into the Commonwealth during the year ended June, 1919, was £875,000, and the estimated value of the corsets manufactured within the Commonwealth represented only about 3 per cent. of our requirements, or a total value of £26,000. As a local industry, the manufacture of corsets has never been a success.

Mr. MATHEWS.—It has never been tried until now.

Mr. GREGORY.—Oh, yes, it has. But the corsets manufactured in Australia have been made chiefly for abnormal figures, and also in connexion with surgical cases. These must necessarily be made from measurements, and that class of corset has been manufactured locally. But no record has ever been kept of the value represented by these manufactures. The present price of corsets is something like 100 per cent. more than it was before the war. During the year 1919-20, nine months of which was covered by the Tariff of 1914, and the remaining three months by the present Tariff, the duty collected upon corsets amounted to £65,200. That period comprised nine months under the 1914 Tariff and only three under the Tariff of 1920. Had the duty been in force for the full year, the amount collected upon corsets from the United Kingdom would have been £99,166, and from the United States of America and Canada £41,981—a total of £141,147. Canada and the United States of America, by the way, are about the only sources outside the United Kingdom from which corsets are imported. The total value of French corsets for the same period under review was only £394,

and of Belgian corsets £217. Added to the total of £141,000 which I have just mentioned, there is always the 10 per cent. put on by the Customs Department, which involves another £7,000. Then there is to be superimposed the importer's profits. He adds a further 15 per cent., and in addition there is the retailer's profit on the amount paid in duty. Honorable members should realize what all these increases mean to the women of Australia when paying for their corsets.

Mr. GREENE.—I will undertake to say that the women will get them more cheaply, made here.

Mr. GREGORY.—Either the Minister's eyes have been shut or he is talking nonsense. It will be the same old story as during the war. The local manufacturer, behind this protection, will put up his prices as near as he can to the cost of the imported article. The total amount involved in the importation of corsets for 1920, including the 15 per cent. added to the duty by the importer, is about £170,000. That is the extra sum which Australian women had to pay. It is of no use to say that the industry when started in Australia can immediately supply the demand. It has to be built up gradually. There is the important factor of the hygienic characteristics of the modern corset, and it involves grave consideration to any one undertaking local manufacture. The main reason, I suppose, why so large a proportion of the imported corsets comes from the United States of America is because greater attention is given there to the matter of hygiene. The *Industrial Australian* of 5th May remarks, regarding corsets, that "the ever-changing fashions demand the assistance of the artist and the expert to produce a beauty of form and deportment to coincide with the mode of the moment." This is well put, but the writer should have taken into consideration the vital point of hygiene. Almost every woman in civilized communities wears corsets, and has done so for generations, so that there has evidently been some natural and physical reason for their universal adoption. This being so, it is imperative that the health and comfort of women should be safeguarded by expert and scientific manu-

facture. It stands to reason that such skilled manufacture can only be obtained at its best by long apprenticeship and acquired dexterity, and that, in evolving new fashionable shapes, the assistance of medical surgery must be invoked for the featuring of successful and healthful models. In the journal which I have just quoted, it is also stated that one-third of the local output at present—that is, after some years of work in the local factories—is discarded and sold at reduced prices as such. This shows that the Australian corset manufacturers, to gain their experience, have to supply a large number of corsets to the feminine public which cannot, from the very fact of present manufacturing inexperience, conform to hygienic standards, thereby constituting a menace to the healthy motherhood of the community. Women buy the corsets that suit them best, and their own instinct advises them that the corsets which are most comfortable to wear are most suitable to their health in every respect. I repeat that experience is necessary for the manufacture of the type of corset which women ask for to-day.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—How are Australian manufacturers to get that experience if we continue to import?

Mr. GREGORY.—I would not object to a duty of 15 per cent.

Mr. GABB.—That would not be enough to influence outside manufacturers to set up here.

Mr. GREGORY.—I think it would. I will give honorable members an idea of the increase which has taken place in the retail rates. A certain line of corset was retailed before the war for 5s. 11d. That same article was sold retail during the war period, but before the imposition of high duties, at 9s. 6d. It has been sold, since the high duties were imposed, for 12s. 6d.—an increase of a little more than 100 per cent.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—There has been the same relative increase with respect to almost every commodity.

Mr. GREGORY.—But here the increased duty proposed is from 10 to 40 per cent. It is not fair to ask our womenfolk to pay for the experience being gained by a few local manufacturers in the course of their blundering along for a number of years in the effort to turn

out a corset of the type fashionably demanded. My desire is to secure the fullest degree of protection for the United Kingdom as against the United States of America. I do not care what duty may be imposed on American imports; but, so far as British corsets are concerned, the duty should be 10 per cent., or, at the highest, 15 per cent.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER (Wakefield) [8.57].—The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) knows more about mines and mining than about ladies' corsets. He has made some remarkable statements which indicate, as a matter of fact, that there is the possibility of a valuable industry being established in Australia. He failed to hit the point at which he aimed when he drew a comparison between the prices of a few years ago and of to-day. This was chiefly due to the fact that the type in fashion nowadays is utterly different. There has been a marked change in the character of this particular manufactured article—a difference which has had to do with hygiene. Apart from that altogether, however, women of to-day are asking generally for a very much superior article. And the very fact that it is a superior class of corset which women want nowadays makes the item as reasonable a one for protection as any other fancy article. I will cite, as an illustration, made-up imported costumes. A few years ago these were imported in huge quantities. However, the local manufacturer was given sufficient protection to establish the industry in Australia on an extensive scale. There is no reason why the same results should not accrue from a reasonable protection in connexion with the manufacture of corsets as have resulted by imposing a duty on costumes and other articles of attire. Encouragement should also be given to the establishment of the industry in Australia, because boxed corsets, being light and bulky, add considerably to the cost. The Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) said that a six-storied factory had been erected in New South Wales. No one is likely to establish a six-storied factory in Sydney, where the land values are very high, unless there is a reasonable prospect of success. It must be admitted that a good deal of skill is

required in the manufacture of modern corsets, and men who put their capital into costly buildings in Sydney and elsewhere will not be operating long before they will be able to produce an article quite as good as the imported. I admit that the Minister is asking for an extravagant rate, and if it is similar to that charged on costumes I shall support it. I cannot understand why this important industry was not established in Australia before, and I feel quite sure that the Committee will be prepared to give it the protection to which it is entitled.

Mr. RILEY (South Sydney) [9.4].—In the South Sydney electorate there is a factory in which nearly £100,000 has been invested, and another is in course of erection, from which, it is said, the proprietors will be able to supply corsets at a cheaper rate than is charged for the imported article. Those engaged in the industry are keen business men, and know that if they do not produce a good article they will be unable to sell it. I may remind the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) that ladies who can afford to purchase the best type of corset do not purchase the imported article, but have them made to order by local manufacturers, whose operatives work under favorable conditions. Probably manufacturers have to import some of the raw material, but that cannot be used as an argument against the establishment of the industry, because when we commenced building we had to import lead, and slates, and other necessities. When we first undertook the construction of locomotives it was said that they would cost considerably more than if they were imported, and every argument which has been used against the corset industry has been brought forward at different times in connexion with others. It is quite true that the business people of York-street, in Sydney, and Flinders-lane, in Melbourne, are endeavouring to get honorable members to keep the duties as low as possible. What for? Not to enable them to employ more, but to keep themselves in a nice, comfortable position. The Minister is taking a step in the right direction, and we should endeavour to encourage this and similar industries by imposing a Tariff which is sufficiently protective. Every honorable member was asked on the hustings whether he was a Free Trader or a Protectionist. I said I was a Protectionist, because I wanted

to see Australia self-contained, and I am now acting up to that promise. During the past twelve months manufacturers have been building up industries on the understanding that these rates would remain.

Mr. PROWSE.—Whose fault is that?

Mr. RILEY.—It is not theirs. These duties have been enforced for the period I have mentioned, and as large sums of money have been invested in buildings, on machinery, and in training staffs, it is unreasonable to suggest that the rates should be reduced by one-half.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Already there are seven or eight factories throughout Australia. There are two or three in Sydney, and a similar number in Victoria.

Mr. RILEY.—That may be so, and if additional factories are erected it will mean the employment of thousands of people. The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) referred to importations from America and France, but I think it is a slander on the ability of the Australian people to expect them to use imported articles when they can be manufactured in this country.

Mr. GREGORY.—I am prepared to support a duty of 30 per cent. against France and America, and 15 per cent. against Great Britain.

Mr. PROWSE.—Could we work on that basis?

Mr. RILEY.—I do not think so. New industries cannot compete with those already established, because they have to incur heavy expenditure in the erection of buildings and purchase of plant, whilst other firms are producing and swamping the market.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—How was it done in New South Wales prior to Federation?

Mr. RILEY.—Since that time the number of factories has increased by 200 or 300 per cent., and Protection has made New South Wales the leading State of the Commonwealth. I trust the Minister (Mr. Greene) will adhere to his decision, and give this industry the protection to which it is entitled. When honorable members were advocating increased duties on bananas and onions I did not offer any objection, because I thought they were necessary to encourage our own industries. If protection is to be given in one direction, why should it not be given in another?

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [9.10].—If any honorable member has made out a good case for lower duties it is the honorable member for South Sydney (Mr. Riley), although he is in favour of a high Protective Tariff. He has informed us that there is a large factory in his electorate manufacturing these particular articles of ladies' attire, and that there is another in course of construction. If these industries have continued successfully under the present Tariff, and new factories are being established, why should the rates be increased? The honorable member has destroyed his own argument.

Mr. CORSER.—The rates in this Tariff have given them protection, and allowed them to proceed with some security.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—These factories were established before the new rates were introduced.

Mr. RILEY.—That is not so.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—They were there before, and, as they are growing like mushrooms, there is no necessity for higher rates.

Mr. RILEY.—I want the existing duties to remain.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Prior to Federation, what was New South Wales doing under a policy of Free Trade. She was exporting her goods to States working under a Protective Tariff. I can remember when the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best) was Minister for Trade and Customs, bemoaning the fact that the industries in Victoria were losing all the trade.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That is not so. I deny that.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I remember seeing an announcement in a Queensland paper to the effect that boots and other articles were coming into Victoria in large quantities. It is amusing to see consideration being shown to the poor manufacturer.

Mr. GABB.—To the poor importer.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—There is no difference between the poor importer and the fat manufacturer, because if one goes to Mosman's Bay it is difficult to tell whether the palatial residences there are occupied by manufacturers or importers. I have not seen any of the working people in New South Wales living in mansions,

cruising in motor boats, or touring in motor cars. The honorable member for Dampier is fighting a very uphill battle, and is working hard in the interests of the consumers in Australia.

Mr. GABB.—For the importers.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Well, what is the difference between fighting for the importers and the honorable member fighting for the fat manufacturer? I ask the Committee to permit me to amend my amendment by making the duties, British, 15 per cent.; intermediate, 20 per cent.; and general Tariff, 30 per cent.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—The honorable member is slipping again.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I am not. I believe that half a loaf is better than no bread; and I think I know what the temper of the Committee is concerning this item. I want to have the duties reduced if at all possible.

Amendment, by leave, amended accordingly.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted (Mr. JAMES PAGE's amendment)—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	..	..	11
Noes	..	..	25
Majority	..	..	14

AYES.

Bowden, E. K.	Page, James
Brennan, F.	Prowse, J. H.
Foley, G.	Wienholt, A.
Gibson, W. G.	Tellers:
Gregory, H.	Bell, G. J.
Jowett, E.	Hill, W. C.

NOES.

Best, Sir Robert	Higgs, W. G.
Blakeley, A.	Lamond, Hector
Blundell, R. P.	Lister, J. H.
Cameron, D. C.	Mackay, G. H.
Charlton, M.	Makin, N. J. O.
Cook, Sir Joseph	Mathews, J.
Cook, Robert	Riley, E.
Corser, E. B. C.	Rodgers, A. S.
Foster, Richard	Watkins, D.
Gabb, J. M.	Wise, G. H.
Greene, W. M.	Tellers:
Groom, L. E.	Burchell, R. J.
Hay, A.	Story, W. H.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Amendment negatived.

Item agreed to.

Item 111 (Articles of natural or imitation hair).

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER (Wakefield) [9.18].—As a further amendment of item 110, I move—

That sub-item B be amended by adding the following:—"and on and after 27th May, British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 45 per cent.; general Tariff, 50 per cent."

As I have already said, these goods are imported in boxes to maintain their condition. This means bulky cargo and costly freights, and, therefore, the protection I now suggest should be quite ample.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Atkinson).—Item 111 is now before the Committee.

Mr. FOLEY.—I rise to a point of order. I should like to know whether item 110 has been put to the Committee. There was an amendment moved to a sub-item, but I have not yet heard the item put as a whole.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—It was put whilst members were crossing the chamber after the division.

Mr. FOLEY.—I take leave to deny that. While honorable members were crossing the chamber the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster) was on his feet, and moved an amendment. I want to know what he is moving his amendment to. It would be quite irrelevant to item 111, which has been called by the Chair.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—I presume that the honorable member's amendment refers to item 110; but I remind honorable members that the Committee passed sub-item A of 110, and then sub-item B. There was then an amendment moved by the honorable member for Maranoa (Mr. James Page), and that was defeated. The consequence was that both sub-items of item 110 were passed, and there was no need to put the item as a whole.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—On the point of order, I wish to say that the honorable member for Maranoa moved that there should be certain duties imposed on corsets, under a new sub-item 110c. His amendment was rejected, and I take it that it is quite competent now for me to move that the duties be higher than those proposed by the honorable member for Maranoa, while they are still lower than the duties proposed by the Minister.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—It was quite competent for the honorable member to have done that if he had done it in time.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I did it immediately after the announcement of the result of the division, and before honorable members had crossed the chamber to resume their seats.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—I admit that I called item 111 before the honorable member for Wakefield rose, and I therefore thought he was speaking to that item.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Before honorable members crossed the chamber you, sir, gave me the call, and I moved an amendment for higher duties than those proposed by the honorable member for Maranoa.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—After announcing item 111 I called on the honorable member for Wakefield, and I thought he was speaking to that item.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—No. I wanted to move for higher duties than those proposed by the honorable member for Maranoa.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—I am prepared to accept the honorable member's amendment if it is the wish of the Committee that I should do so.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—On the point of order, the Chairman distinctly put 110A and then 110B. At the request of the honorable member for Maranoa, he again put the question to the Committee, and the honorable member subsequently moved an additional sub-item c after 110B had been passed. Since the proposed sub-item 110c has been defeated, I take it that the whole of item 110 has been dealt with.

Mr. FOLEY.—I contend that the whole item has not yet been dealt with. I admit that when the Chairman called item 110 there was a discussion as to whether it should be put as a whole, and the Minister rose and said he had no objection to the sub-items being put separately if the Chairman did not object to that course. The Chairman had no objection, and sub-item 110A was put. Discussion arose upon it, and it was carried. Then sub-item B was put.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—What is the honorable member arguing for? I understand

Mr. Richard Foster.

that the Chairman has decided to grant the privilege asked for.

Mr. FOLEY.—With all due deference to the right honorable gentleman, I have risen to a point of order, and, having done so, I am at liberty to discuss it under the Standing Orders of any Parliament in Australia. I am going to discuss it irrespective of the advice of my right honorable friend. Sub-item B was put to the Committee, and then an amendment was moved as sub-item c, by the honorable member for Maranoa. That amendment was defeated, but the whole item was not then passed. It was open to further amendment, and another amendment was moved by the honorable member for Wakefield before honorable members had resumed their seats after the division. In the circumstances, I contend that the whole item 110 has not yet been carried.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—The reason why the item was not put as a whole after the sub-items had been separately discussed was that no amendment had been made. It was unnecessary to put the item as a whole, as each part of it had already been passed.

Item agreed to.

Item 112 (Furs and other skins, and articles made thereof) agreed to.

Item 113 (Gloves).

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [9.32].—Will the Minister (Mr. Greene) explain why harvesting, driving, housemaids', and gardening gloves are dutiable at a much higher rate than are the better class of gloves? There may be some reason for this differentiation, but it seems to me that the duty on gloves used in connexion with arduous labour should be lower than that on gloves that are really a luxury.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.33].—The reason why a higher rate of duty is imposed on harvesting, driving, housemaids', and gardening gloves is that gloves of that class are made here, whereas kid gloves are not manufactured in Australia.

Item agreed to.

Item 114—

Hats, caps, and bonnets—

(c) Fur felt hats, in any stage of manufacture, per dozen, British, 24s., or 35 per cent.; intermediate, 30s., or

40 per cent.; general, 36s., or 45 per cent., whichever rate returns the higher duty.

- (E) Hats and bonnets of all descriptions and materials, n.e.i., including forms, pull-over hoods weighing not more than 1½ ozs. each, shapes, and frames, n.e.i., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [9.34].—The British preferential Tariff in respect of sub-item B, which deals with wool felt hats in any stage of manufacture, has been increased from 12s. per dozen, or *ad valorem*, 30 per cent. under the 1908-11 Tariff to 15s. per dozen or *ad valorem*, 35 per cent. I should like the Minister (Mr. Greene) to consider whether it would not be possible to revert to the 1908-11 Tariff so far as imports from Great Britain are concerned, while imposing, if necessary, a higher duty under the general Tariff. The hat industry has been carried on here for many years, and although I have not been able to obtain any statistics in regard to it, I understand that it is on a remarkably sound basis. I am told that the Denton Hat Mills have done exceedingly well.

Mr. JOWETT.—They make very good hats.

Mr. GREGORY.—Yes; and I believe they have taken full advantage of the market. My observations will apply also to sub-items C and D, which deal with fur-felt hats and caps and sewn hats. Having regard to the time during which the industry has enjoyed a substantial measure of protection, I think it should be able to stand under the old rates. It has not been shown that there is any necessity for these increased duties, and I can see no justification for an increase.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.36].—The honorable member will find that I have not raised the duties fixed under the Tariff of 1914. The reason is that in the interim local hat manufacturers have been able pretty well to cope with the whole of our trade. That being so, I thought it desirable that they should be left in that position.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The trouble is that there is too much of a close corporation so far as this industry is concerned. We want a little more competition.

Mr. GREENE.—There is considerable local competition. Before the war we were importing something like £250,000 worth of fur, wool, and felt hats annually. During the war local manufacturers were able, and have been able since then, to take care of the greater part of that trade. The only class now being imported to any extent is the better make of fur hats of very high value. Even that branch of the trade is being catered for by a new factory which has been established quite recently in the electorate of the honorable member for South Sydney (Mr. Riley). I believe that factory is now turning out practically as good a hat as is produced in any other part of the world. In the circumstances, I think it desirable to allow the duty under the 1914 Tariff to stand, at all events, for some little time to come.

Mr. JOWETT (Grampians) [9.38].—I desire to support the proposal of the Minister (Mr. Greene). So far as I can see, the manufacture of felt and other hats in Australia is in very much the same position as the wool industry. I had occasion, not long ago, to purchase a new felt hat, and on making inquiries discovered that for imported felt hats preposterously high prices were asked.

Mr. HAY.—They cost almost as much as a suit of clothes.

Mr. JOWETT.—Yes. When I asked the shopkeeper for a Denton hat, he produced one, and although it was only about one-third of the price asked for the imported article, it was, in my opinion, quite as good. I have no shares in any hat factory, but I take this opportunity of saying a good word for our Australian hat manufacturers.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.39].—I propose to move an amendment in sub-item E. The British preferential duty on hats dealt with in that sub-item has been reduced, owing to a purely clerical error. I therefore move—

That after the words "30 per cent." (British), sub-item E, the following words be inserted:—"and on and after 27th May, 1921, 35 per cent."

That is the rate which applies right through the item. The appearance of the words "thirty per cent." in the schedule was due to a purely clerical error in

copying the Tariff from one book to another.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [9.40].—I should like to ask the Minister (Mr. Greene) whether he has given any consideration to the desirableness of improving the position of that branch of the industry which is making straw hats, and all forms of plaited hats or bonnets. Many persons in Australia have been engaged in all forms of straw hat manufacture. Competition from abroad is now becoming very keen, and those interested in the local trade have only lately discovered the peculiar position in which they are placed. They approached me some little time ago with regard to the matter, but were rather late in putting it before the Department. If we can produce information showing the necessity for increased protection in respect of this branch of the trade before the Tariff goes to the Senate, will the honorable gentleman give us an opportunity to put that information before the Committee?

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.42].—The matter to which the honorable member (Mr. Mathews) has referred has recently been brought under my notice, but I have not had time to look into it. If, as the result of further investigation, we find it necessary to recommit the item in order to deal with the question, we shall certainly do so. I may remind the honorable member that quite lately we have taken action to assist that branch of the industry which he has in mind. For instance, only to-night we have placed on the free list the straw braid which straw hat-makers use. We have also taken other action in the same direction in connexion with several items to assist the trade. I am not sure whether it is possible to do what the manufacturers are asking in regard to hoods, which are included in the sub-item, but if we find it necessary to bring the matter up again later on we shall do so.

Mr. JAMES PAGE (Maranoa) [9.43].—This is about the hottest proposition we have yet struck; but I have been expecting some of our prohibitionist friends to ask for a still further duty to assist this "struggling" industry. If honorable members had studied the item carefully,

I do not think they would be prepared to let it pass without a "squeak." The honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) has showed great concern for the wool felt hat-making industry, and has expressed the opinion that the Government are rightly protecting that branch of the trade. Has he nothing to say in regard to the duty on fur hats? We have in this Parliament honorable members who are never tired of attending big loyalty meetings in the Town Hall or Empire Day celebrations, and saying, most fervently, "God bless the Empire." With a sob in their voices, they talk of the wonderful Empire of which we form a part, and refer with particular pride to that dear old Free Trade country, England. But when it comes to showing some practical preference towards the "dear old Mother Country," it is represented by a duty of 24s. per dozen on hats. I do not care how much the duties are raised against the foreigner. The hat mills here, particularly the Denton Mills, are paying exorbitant dividends, and yet we find high duties imposed in their favour from Tariff to Tariff. This duty against British hats amounts to prohibition. The honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) was only stating the truth when he told us that when he went into a shop he was shown imported hats for which exorbitant prices were asked. I have been offered an imported hat, for which the price quoted was £4 10s. I should want a suit of clothes for that price.

Mr. JOWETT.—There was no duty in that case to justify the price.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—I know that; the price is put up by either the importer or the retailer.

Mr. JOWETT.—It is exorbitant rapacity.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—If we are going to give British preference in more than name, the duty ought to be reduced.

Mr. JOWETT.—Does the Minister propose to increase the duty on British-made hats?

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—The duty is exactly the same as in the last Tariff.

Mr. GREENE.—I have increased the British preference.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—However that may be, I am going to test the prohibitionists in order to see whether they mean what they say.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Atkinson).—The Minister will first have to withdraw the amendment before the Committee.

Mr. JAMES PAGE.—Perhaps the Minister will temporarily withdraw his amendment?

Mr. GREENE.—Very well; I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment (by Mr. JAMES PAGE) proposed—

That the following words be inserted after sub-item c:—"and on and after 27th May, 1921, per dozen, British, 24s.; intermediate, 40s.; general, 80s.; or ad val., British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 60 per cent.; general, 80 per cent., whichever rate returns the higher duty.

Mr. RILEY (South Sydney) [9.50].—I think that the honorable member for Maranoa is perfectly right in what he says. A factory has been established in New South Wales which is producing hats of better quality than those imported, but there is a prejudice against them because they are Australian-made. If we can kill that prejudice by excluding imported hats it is a step in the right direction.

Amendment negatived.

Amendment (by Mr. GREENE) agreed to—

That after the words "30 per cent." (British), sub-item E, the following words be inserted:—"and on and after 27th May, 1921, 35 per cent."

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 115—

Socks and stockings for human attire, viz.:—(A) cotton, ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent.

Mr. FOLEY (Kalgoorlie) [9.51].—This item includes cotton hose, and I have noticed that in previous Tariff debates honorable members, no matter what their political faith might be, have many times expressed the opinion that this commodity is rated too high. The argument has been used for years in Australia, as on the present occasion, that these duties are formed for the purpose of building up industries. But when the honorable member for Yarra (Mr. Tudor) was Minister for Trade and Customs he admitted that no cotton hose was made in Australia. In the 1914 Tariff cotton socks were free under British preference, with a 10 per cent. duty under the general Tariff, but under the present Tariff

the British duty is 30 per cent. I am quite with honorable members who desire to see industries established in this country, but if cotton socks are not manufactured here there is no industry to encourage; the consumers have to pay the duty every time, and these in the present instance are the families of the lesser-paid employees.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—On what basis are the worker's wages fixed?

Mr. FOLEY.—Unfortunately, they are fixed on the cost of living, a basis which, if I had my way, would never be used. On the gold-fields of Western Australia recently a wages award was given on the extra cost of living, included in the extra cost being that of the clothing of the children of the workers. The lower-paid men have to clothe their wives and families in cotton hose, for the price of woollen goods is almost prohibitive.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—Does the honorable member not think that it would be much better to devote his attention to increasing wages so that the workers may buy other than cotton goods, rather than cheapening the goods, and thus keeping wages down to a cotton-hose level?

Mr. FOLEY.—The honorable member cannot point to one instance in which I have done anything but try to better the conditions of the workers. This industry has never been established in Australia, and any duties imposed will only be a direct impost on those less able to afford it. I move—

That after the words "30 per cent." (British), sub-item A, the following words be inserted:—"And on and after 27th May, 1921, 10 per cent."

Up to the war period we always heard it said that the lowly-paid men in Great Britain could produce goods much cheaper than we can here, but at the present time there is no great discrepancy between the rates of wages.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Has the honorable member forgotten that in the cotton industry wages have only recently dropped 40 per cent.?

Mr. FOLEY.—That is according to an arrangement entered into between the employers and the employed. In any case, that arrangement has been entered into only within a few days, so that if this item had been debated a fortnight ago the argument of the honorable member would not have applied. The honorable

member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews) yesterday said that his heart never went out for one moment to the manufacturer, who was his last consideration. In this case the honorable member has no manufacturer to consider, but only the persons who have to pay for cotton hose.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I shall show you in a moment that you know nothing about the matter.

Mr. FOLEY.—I give the honorable member credit for knowing everything that is to be known, but I know that the moment a duty is imposed on these goods we shall have them dumped into Australia by the same people who sent them here before, and the extra price will have to be paid by those least able to afford it. So far as Japanese goods are concerned, we have nothing to fear from them in Australia. They had their chance during the war, and I defy any honorable member to prove to my satisfaction that anything good ever came from Japan. Their productions are the cheapest and shoddiest that have ever come into this country, and, so far as they are concerned, I am content to leave that duty where it is, but I think 30 per cent. on British goods is too much.

Mr. RILEY (South Sydney) [10.1].—I hope the Committee will not take serious notice of the statements made by the honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Foley) about the dangers of dumping, because this Tariff has been in operation for about twelve months, and dumping could have been indulged in during the whole of that time. What has been the result of the Tariff? Is it not a fact that a great number of manufacturers have established important businesses in Australia? The honorable member for Cook (Mr. J. H. Catts) the other day produced some very good samples of stockings and socks which had been manufactured in his division.

Mr. CORSER.—At 12s. a dozen.

Mr. GREGORY.—They have not got much beyond the sample stage as yet.

Mr. RILEY.—Those socks and stockings, cotton goods, are much cheaper than the imported article, and the establishment of the factory has prevented importers from putting up the price of socks and stockings against the people of Australia. This firm have their own engineering shops, and have manufactured their own

knitting machines and other appliances for the production of these articles.

Mr. CORSER.—They have spent quite £300,000 on plant and buildings.

Mr. RILEY.—That is quite true. They have established their business in perfectly good faith, and in the belief that the Tariff would give them protection. The wholesale price for their socks is 9d. per pair.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—What is the retail price?

Mr. RILEY.—We have no control over the retail price; but the manufacturers are prepared to supply a cheap article, and, if sufficient inducement offers, they intend to grow their own cotton. If honorable members believe in encouraging people to go on the land and produce the raw material for our secondary industries, here is a splendid opportunity for them to show their *bona fides*.

Mr. CORSER.—We can grow cotton as well in Australia as any other country in the world.

Mr. RILEY.—Of course we can; and this firm, an American concern, are treating the employees very well indeed. I have spoken to some of their men, who tell me that they are in the best job they have ever had, the work being light, the wages good, and conditions all that can be desired.

Mr. GREGORY.—How many hands are employed?

Mr. RILEY.—I understand that they employ about 400.

Mr. GREGORY.—My information is that they employ 100.

Mr. CORSER.—They employed 300 in the first factory.

Mr. RILEY.—I believe that is so. They are about to establish another factory in my division, and so they are extending their business. I do not wish to increase the price of these articles to the general public, but I say that it would be bad policy for the Committee to agree to any reduction in the items, and thus place this growing industry at the mercy of the importers.

Mr. GREGORY.—Whose fault is that? Does the honorable member mean to say that the Government can bring down a Tariff, and throw it on the table, and

allow fifteen months to elapse before we have an opportunity to discuss the items?

Mr. RILEY.—These people have established themselves in business here, and it would be a great hardship now if, by a reduction of the duty, the whole of their business arrangements were dislocated. I hope the Minister (Mr. Greene) will stand by the item, and keep faith with all those firms that have come to this country.

Mr. CONSIDINE (Barrier) [10.6].—I have discovered, in listening to the debate on these items, that apparently the workers of this country are having a fine time in the various industries that have been established, and for which protection is asked in this Tariff.

Mr. CORSER.—They are well satisfied.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—If that is so, I want to know what is the cause of all this industrial unrest throughout Australia. The honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Foley) informed the Committee this evening that the poorer paid workers in his division were obliged to wear cotton stockings, and in order that they should continue to do so he wants, not to improve their working conditions, but to make cotton goods cheaper. I have no desire to do that. I want the standard of living so raised that the workers of Australia will not need to wear cotton socks. I would prefer that they should wear the woollen article. I want to see every worker in this country in a position to wear the very best material that is obtainable.

Mr. HILL.—And why not, in view of the fact that wool is so cheap?

Mr. CONSIDINE.—I will allow the honorable member himself to answer that conundrum. He and the rest of his party are keen about prohibiting the importation of chaff and every other primary product that they sell, but they want other commodities free which they have to buy.

Mr. HILL.—We want to give the people cheap socks. Apparently the honorable member does not.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—I do not want cotton socks at all. I wore them once, not because I liked them, and I have no doubt that the workers of Australia only wear cotton goods because they are ex-

ploited to such an extent that they cannot afford to buy the better class material.

Mr. FOLEY.—I have never pulled a poor mouth about the workers of this country. If the people in the honorable member's division worked, as they do in mine, they would be able to have woollen goods, too.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—If they did in my division what they did in the honorable member's, no doubt I would not be here, and so I do not agree with the honorable member's line of argument in that respect. But I am sure that if he goes back to Kalgoorlie, and tells the workers that he worked overtime in this House in order that they might be enabled to continue to wear cheap cotton socks, it will not contribute much to the success of his future election campaigns. Naturally, he does not want the attention of the workers in his division to be drawn to the fact that he is anxious that their wages shall not be increased to such an extent that they need not be compelled to continue wearing cotton socks, and that he is endeavouring to bring their prices down by a reduction in the Tariff. On the other hand, we hear him talking about dumping. The Protectionist argument is that dumped foreign goods ruin the local manufacturers. The honorable member cannot have it both ways. He complains about the high price of cotton socks and when, by interjection, I asked him how wages were fixed, he confessed they were determined by the cost of living. That has been my contention right through this debate on the Tariff, and so the honorable member's admission proves the soundness of my argument that the worker's wages are fixed on the cost of the duty-paid articles. Does the honorable member contend that if the cost of living were reduced wages would remain at their present level? As a matter of fact, cotton socks, as one item of expenditure for the working man, would be considered by an Arbitration Court or Wages Board in arriving at a cost-of-living estimate, and to that extent it would influence the finding. Therefore, does it matter very much to the working class whether we have a Tariff of 100 per cent. or no Tariff at all? The great mass of the workers at any time only receive what is the average cost of living.

Mr. FOLEY.—The honorable member ought to thank me for having given him an opportunity to explain his position.

Mr. CONSIDINE.—I thank the honorable member for unwittingly giving me an opportunity of demonstrating to the workers in his division the economic unsoundness of his own argument.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [10.14].—A fortnight ago I visited a factory in New South Wales, and was informed that the company were able to supply 4,000 dozen pairs of socks and stockings in three days. We also have, at Hawthorn, Melbourne, an establishment that can produce 200,000 pairs of cotton socks per annum. These businesses have been started under the new Tariff. I can show two pairs of cotton hose, one manufactured in America, and retailed at 1s. 11d., and the other manufactured in New South Wales at a wholesale price of 1s., leaving a margin of 11d., or nearly 100 per cent., which ought to be sufficient to cover all wholesale and retail profits. The American article is not as good a hose as the stockings made in Sydney; but the wholesale houses of Australia,

wittingly or unwittingly, retard the progress of local manufacturers by the exorbitant price they demand for passing on the article to the public. A profit of 6d. ought to cover all wholesale and retail profits on an article which is turned out by the factory for 1s. I can also produce a pair of stockings made in Victoria. The quality is excellent, but I cannot quote the price. These samples I have ought to convince honorable members that cotton stockings can be made in Australia. I was surprised at the quality of the articles produced in the New South Wales factory. I want to point out to the ladies that the wholesale and retail houses are robbing them by the prices they are charging for so-called silk stockings. Artificial silk stockings, made in Sydney, are sold to the wholesale houses for 7s. 6d. per pair; but I saw the same stockings marked at the retail prices of 22s. 6d. and 25s. a pair in Sydney. While we insist on the manufacture of these articles in Australia, we ought also to be given power to deal with those who make undue profits out of the consumers.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.22 p.m.

Members of the House of Representatives.

Speaker—The Honorable Sir Elliot Johnson, K.C.M.G.

Chairman of Committees—The Honorable John Moore Chanter.

Anstey, Frank .. Bourke (V.)	Hughes, Right Hon. William Bendigo (V.)
³ Atkinson, Llewelyn .. Wilmot (T.)	Morris, P.C., K.C.
⁷ Bamford, Hon. Frederick Herbert (Q.)	Jackson, David Sydney .. Bass (T.)
William	Johnson, Hon. Sir Elliot, Lang, (N.S.W.)
Bayley, James Garfield .. Oxley (Q.)	K.C.M.G.
Bell, George John, C.M.G., Darwin (T.)	Jowett, Edmund .. Grampians (V.)
D.S.O.	⁵ Kerby, Edwin Thomas Ballarat (V.)
Best, Hon. Sir Robert Kooyong (V.)	John
Wallace, K.C.M.G.	Lamond, Hector .. Illawarra (N.S.W.)
Blakeley, Arthur .. Darling (N.S.W.)	Lavelle, Thomas James .. Calare (N.S.W.)
Blundell, Hon. Reginald Adelaide (S.A.)	Lazzarini, Hubert Peter .. Werriwa (N.S.W.)
Pole	Lister, John Henry .. Corio (V.)
Bowden, Eric Kendall .. Nepean (N.S.W.)	Livingston, John .. Barker (S.A.)
Brennan, Frank .. Batman (V.)	Mackay, George Hugh .. Lilley (Q.)
Bruce, Stanley Melbourne Flinders (V.)	⁸ Mahon, Hon. Hugh .. Kalgoorlie (W.A.)
M.C.	Mahony, William George Dalley (N.S.W.)
Burchell, Reginald John Fremantle (W.A.)	Makin, Norman John Hindmarsh (S.A.)
M.C.	Oswald
Cameron, Donald Charles Brisbane (Q.)	Maloney, William .. Melbourne (V.)
C.M.G., D.S.O.	Marks, Walter Moffitt .. Wentworth (N.S.W.)
Catts, James Howard .. Cook (N.S.W.)	Marr, Charles William Parkes (N.S.W.)
Chanter, Hon. John Riverina (N.S.W.)	Clanan, D.S.O., M.C.
Moore	Mathews, James .. Melbourne Ports (V.)
Chapman, Hon. Austin .. Eden-Monaro	Maxwell, George Arnot .. Fawkner (V.)
(N.S.W.)	¹ McDonald, Hon. Charles .. Kennedy (Q.)
³ Charlton, Matthew† .. Hunter (N.S.W.)	⁶ McGrath, David Charles .. Ballarat (V.)
⁴ Considine, Michael Patrick Barrier (N.S.W.)	McWilliams, William James Franklin (T.)
Cook, Right Hon. Sir Parramatta (N.S.W.)	Moloney, Parker John .. Hume (N.S.W.)
Joseph, P.C., G.C.M.G.	Nicholls, Samuel Robert .. Macquarie (N.S.W.)
Cook, Robert .. Indi (V.)	Page, Earle Christmas Cowper (N.S.W.)
Corser, Edward Bernard Wide Bay (Q.)	Grafton
Cresset	Page, Hon. James .. Maranoa (Q.)
Cunningham, Lucien Gwydir (N.S.W.)	Poynton, Hon. Alexander, Grey (S.A.)
Lawrence	O.B.E.
Fenton, James Edward .. Maribyrnong (V.)	Prowse, John Henry .. Swan (W.A.)
³ Fleming, William Mont-Robertson (N.S.W.)	Riley, Edward .. South Sydney
gomerie	(N.S.W.)
⁹ Foley, George James .. Kalgoorlie (W.A.)	Rodgers, Hon. Arthur Stan-Wannon (V.)
Foster, Hon. Richard Wakefield (S.A.)	islaus
Witty	Ryan, Hon. Thomas West Sydney
² Fowler, Hon. James Perth (W.A.)	Joseph, K.C. (N.S.W.)
Mackinnon	Ryrie, Sir Granville de North Sydney
Francis, Frederick Henry Henty (V.)	Laune, K.C.M.G., C.B. (N.S.W.)
Gabb, Joel Moses .. Angas (S.A.)	Smith, Hon. William Denison (T.)
Gibson, William Gerrard Corangamite (V.)	Henry Laird
Greene, Hon. Walter Richmond (N.S.W.)	Stewart, Percy Gerald .. Wimmera (V.)
Massy	Story, William Harrison .. Boothby (S.A.)
Gregory, Hon. Henry .. Dampier (W.A.)	Tudor, Hon. Frank Gwynne Yarra (V.)
Groom, Hon. Littleton Darling Downs (Q.)	³ Watkins, Hon. David .. Newcastle (N.S.W.)
Ernest	Watt, Right Hon. William Balaclava (V.)
Hay, Alexander .. New England	Alexander, P.C.
(N.S.W.)	West, John Edward .. East Sydney
Higgs, Hon. William Guy Capricornia (Q.)	(N.S.W.)
Hill, William Caldwell .. Echuca (V.)	Wienholt, Arnold .. Moreton (Q.)
	Wise, Hon. George Henry .. Gippsland (V.)

1. Sworn 27th February, 1920.—2. Sworn 3rd March, 1920.—3. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 4th March, 1920.—4. Made affirmation, 5th March, 1920.—5. Election declared void, 2nd June, 1920.—
† Sworn 11th May, 1920.—6. Elected 10th July, 1920.—Sworn 21st July, 1920.—7. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 13th May, 1920.—8. Expelled and seat declared vacant, 12th November, 1920.—
9. Elected 18th December, 1920. Sworn 6th April, 1921.

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

Senate—G. H. Monahan.

House of Representatives—W. A. Gale, C.M.G.

Parliamentary Reporting Staff—B. H. Friend, I.S.O.

Library—A. Wadsworth.

Joint House Committee—F. U'Ren.



The weekly issues of Parliamentary Debates are supplied gratuitously, on application, for use in Public Libraries, and also in Schools of Arts, Mechanics' Institutes, Debating Societies (having not less than fifty members), and similar institutions.

Applications on behalf of the above-mentioned institutions should be addressed to the Honorable the President or the Honorable the Speaker.

Subscriptions should be sent to the Government Printer, Melbourne.

B. HARRY FRIEND,
Principal Parliamentary Reporter.

COMMITTEES.

SENATE.

DISPUTED RETURNS AND QUALIFICATIONS.—Senator Fairbairn, Senator Gardiner, Senator Sir T. W. Glasgow, Senator Keating, Senator Lynch, Senator Pratten, and Senator Senior.

STANDING ORDERS.—The President, the Chairman of Committees, Senator Crawford,* Senator de Largie, Senator Duncan, Senator Earle, Senator Elliott, Senator Foll, Senator Gardiner, and Senator Lynch.

LIBRARY.—The President, Senator Benny, Senator Bolton, Senator de Largie, Senator Gardiner, Senator Keating, and Senator Pratten.

HOUSE.—The President, the Chairman of Committees, Senator Buzacott, Senator J. F. Guthrie, Senator Rowell, Senator Thomas, and Senator Wilson.

PRINTING.—Senator Adamson, Senator Cox, Senator J. D. Millen, Senator Newland, Senator Plain, Senator Reid, and Senator Senior.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (JOINT).—Senator Bolton, Senator Buzacott, and Senator J. D. Millen.

PUBLIC WORKS.—(JOINT).—Senator Foll, Senator Newland, and Senator Plain.

SENATE OFFICIALS: SELECT COMMITTEE.—Senator de Largie, Senator Drake-Brockman, Senator Duncan, Senator Earle, Senator Elliott, Senator Reid, and Senator Senior. Progress report presented 12th May, 1921.

* Appointed 14th April, 1921.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

STANDING ORDERS.—Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Charlton, Mr. Fowler, and Mr. Tudor.

LIBRARY.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Anstey, Mr. Fleming, Mr. Fowler, Mr. Higgs, Mr. Lamond, Mr. Mackay, Dr. Maloney, Mr. Maxwell, and Mr. McDonald.

HOUSE.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Foster, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Livingston, Mr. Mathews, Mr. James Page, Mr. Rodgers, and Mr. Watkins.

PRINTING.—Mr. Bamford, Mr. Bowden, Mr. Corser, Mr. Fenton, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Riley, and Mr. West.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (JOINT).—Mr. Bayley, Mr. Charlton, Mr. Fenton, Mr. Fleming, Mr. Fowler, Mr. Prowse, and Mr. West.

PUBLIC WORKS (JOINT).—Mr. Atkinson*, Mr. Bamford, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Jackson†, Mr. Mackay, Mr. Mathews, and Mr. Parker Moloney.

SEA CARRIAGE SELECT COMMITTEE.—Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Burchell, Mr. Corser, Mr. Foster, Mr. Mahony, Mr. McWilliams, and Mr. Watkins. Final report presented 20th October, 1920.

* Resigned 12th May, 1921.

Appointed 19th May, 1921.